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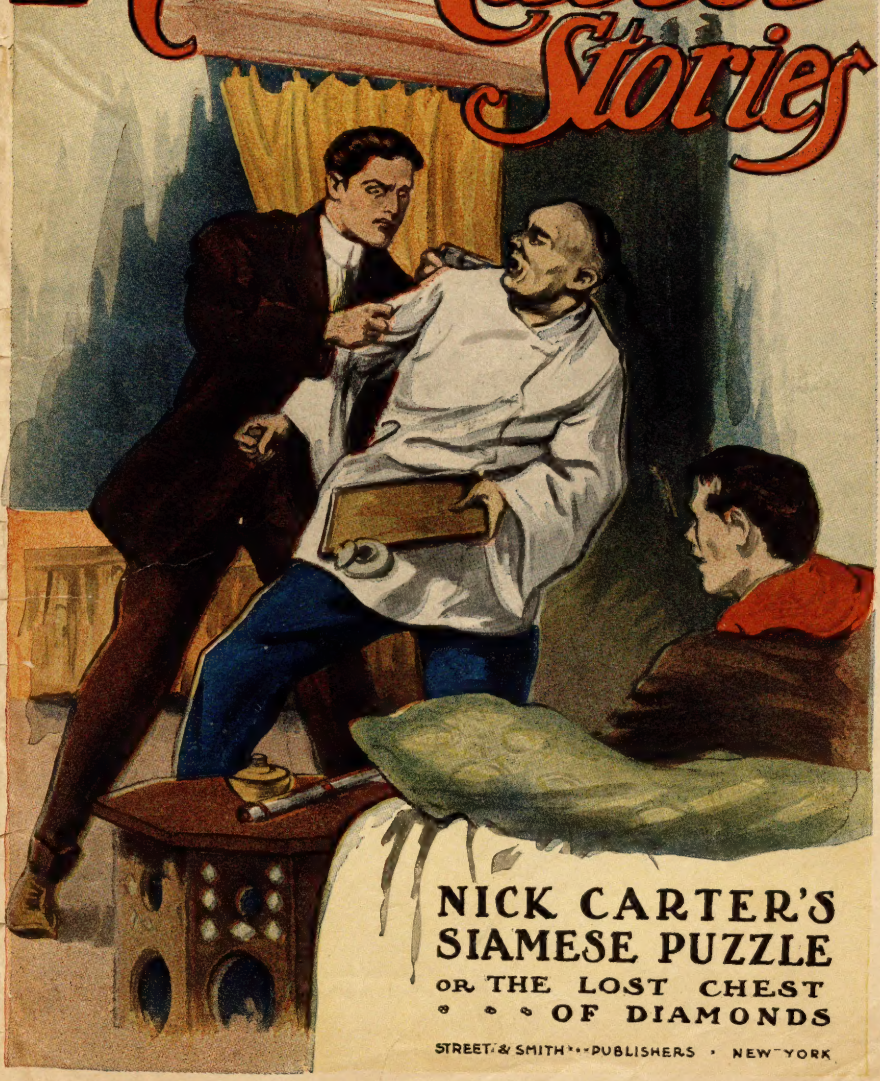
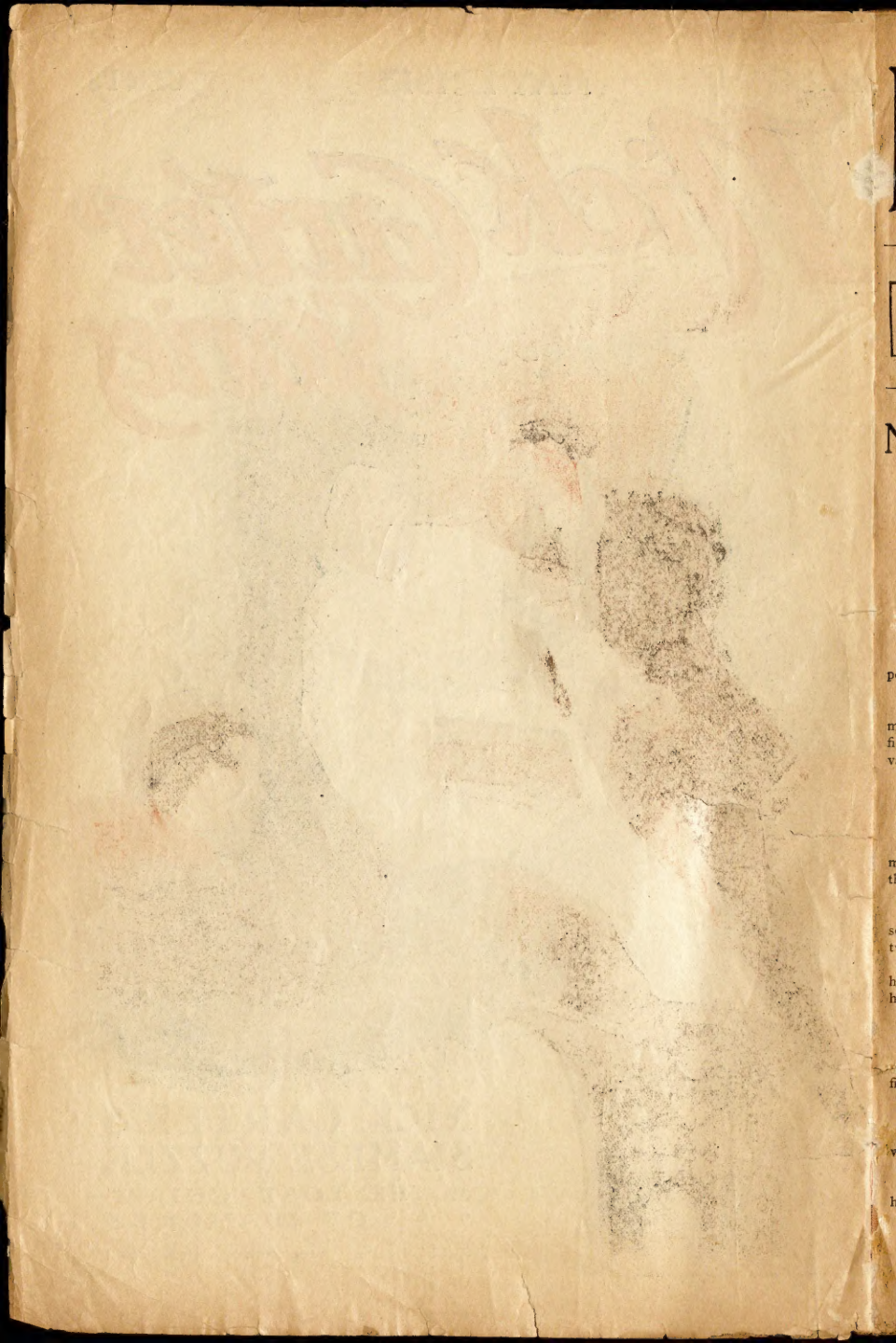
Nick Carter Stories



NICK CARTER'S SIAMESE PUZZLE

OR THE LOST CHEST OF DIAMONDS

STREET & SMITH · PUBLISHERS · NEW YORK



NICK CARTER STORIES

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No. 36. NEW YORK, May 17, 1913. **Price Five Cents.**

NICK CARTER'S SIAMESE PUZZLE;

Or, THE LOST CHEST OF DIAMONDS.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

A ROYAL THIEF.

"Here's the man I am looking for, chief."

Nick Carter handed a card to the Chicago chief of police, a card bearing the following:

"Prince Yet Klomb, Bangkok, Siam."

"It ought to be easy to find a Siamese prince," remarked the chief. "Those fellows always travel with fifteen or twenty servants, fan carriers, umbrella holders, valets, and so on."

"This man is going it alone."

"Then he can't be much of a prince."

"I agree with you there. He's a royal thief."

"Thief?"

"Nothing less. He left his native Bangkok and absent-mindedly took with him a chest of diamonds belonging to the king."

"Whew! How much of a graft was it?"

"The agent of his imperial highness, who secured my services in New York, said the stolen gems were worth two hundred thousand pounds."

"A million dollars!" the chief whistled. "I should say he was a royal thief; and what's more, I don't blame him for traveling alone. He came to New York?"

"Yes, and left for Chicago, chest and all."

"When was this?"

"A month ago."

"How did he get his treasure box past the custom officers?"

"Conundrum. But he did it."

"He must be a smart heathen."

"No doubt of that, or he'd never have got out of Siam with the goods."

"He's got four weeks the start of you, Nick."

"He's got considerable leeway, but the magnitude of his operations is the point that will make him trouble. When he comes to unload the diamonds he'll strike a bigger snag than he has yet encountered."

"He'll not dump them on the market all in a bunch."

"Certainly not. Some of the stones will be recut, and the largest will be cut into smaller ones."

"You don't think he's in Chicago now, do you?"

"He may be."

"It wouldn't be easy for him to disguise himself. A Siamese is a peculiar-looking person and would arouse curiosity wherever he appeared."

"A chink disguise would help him out."

"Naturally. Could he talk English?"

"Quite well."

"What does he look like? Any distinguishing marks about him that would enable him to be identified?"

"There is only one peculiarity in his make-up."

"What's that?"

"His right hand."

"Finger or two gone?"

"The whole hand is gone at the wrist, and he wears a false one carved from ebony."

"By Jove! An ebony right hand!"

The chief looked at the detective with staring eyes for a moment, then he jumped up and took a turn about his office.

"You've heard of the fellow?" asked Nick.

"I've heard of a foreigner with a wooden hand, and he may be the same one."

"How long ago was this?"

"Monday."

"And this is Thursday. Where was he?"

"At an undertaker's on Clark Street."

Nick started in his chair.

"Dead?" he asked.

"Yes."

"What killed him?"

"Heart disease, according to the doctor who was called in."

"What was done with the body?"

"A friend took charge of it."

"Not a Siamese?"

"No; an American."

"What was his name?"

"I don't know, but I can find out."

The chief pressed an electric button on his desk and an officer entered.

"Is Harker around?"

"Yes, sir; outside in the squadroom."

"Have him come in."

The officer went out and the chief turned to Nick.

"Harker is a plain-clothes man and he happened to be within six feet of this foreigner when he dropped on the walk, near the corner of Van Buren and Clark."

"Was any one with the man?"

"Give it up; but here's Harker, and he'll tell you."

The detective entered and gave the salute.

"I want to know something about that foreigner who tumbled over on the street last Monday, Harker," said the chief. "Was there any one with him?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who?"

"The same man who afterward took the body."

"Know his name?"

Harker took out a notebook.

"Paul Philip, attorney at law, McClintock Building."

"What did the dead man look like?" put in Nick.

"He was undersized," answered Harker, turning toward the detective, "an' looked a good deal like a Jap, only he wasn't a Jap, as any one could see with half an eye."

"How was he dressed?"

"American clothes."

"Did he try to say anything after he fell?"

"He didn't speak a word. This man Philip and I carried him into a drug store and we got a doctor. But it didn't do any good. The chap was dead. Heart disease, the doctor said, and gave a death certificate. After that the body was taken to Hepner's undertaking rooms."

"Much obliged," said Nick, getting up.

The chief dismissed the detective.

"He may not be the man you want, Nick."

"If he has a wooden right hand it is almost a cinch that he is."

"Strange that he should tumble over with heart disease right at this stage of the game."

"So strange that I'm inclined to doubt it."

"What! You don't suspect foul play?"

"I'm not suspecting anything, chief. What I want is the box of diamonds. If I have to capture a murderer in order to get the box, I shall do it."

"Well, I wish you all the luck imaginable, Nick. If I can help you in any way, don't fail to call."

"Thank you."

Thereupon the noted detective turned and left the chief's office.

CHAPTER II.

THE ATTORNEY.

"A gentleman to see you, sir."

This announcement was made by the office boy, and Paul Philip, attorney at law, half turned toward the door. His arm was bared to the elbow, and his forefinger was just pressing the piston of a hypodermic syringe.

"All right, Billy," said Philip, hastily tossing the hypoderm on the table and drawing down his sleeve; "show him in."

The next moment the caller was in the office.

"Mr. Philip?"

"My name."

The lawyer's cheeks were flushed, and a peculiar brightness pervaded his eyes.

The caller fixed upon him a sweeping, critical glance, and then said:

"My name is Nicholas, and I'm a reporter——

"Good day!" the lawyer interrupted shortly.

Mr. "Nicholas" stood his ground.

"I called to see if I couldn't get a story out of that——"

"You heard what I said?" asked the lawyer brusquely. "I have no time for reporters."

"I think you will have time for me."

"Then you have another think coming. Get out of here!"

"I beg your pardon, is this your cuff?"

The cuff had rolled to the side of the desk and lay almost at the detective's feet.

"Yes," replied Philip, with a start.

As he slipped up his coat for the purpose of adjusting the cuff, the detective saw that the wristband was unbuttoned and that the undershirt was rolled up; also that the forearm was dotted with minute black points. The hypoderm lay on the desk, and the fact that it had been recently used was attested by a trickling drop of white fluid clinging to the needlelike point. The attorney was a user of morphine. Nick chalked down this information for future use, and calmly seated himself.

"Mr. Nicholas," said Philip, whirling around in his office chair, "I suppose you want to talk with me about Chunder Sen, the man who dropped dead on Clark Street last Monday. I haven't anything to say for publication."

"His name was Chunder Sen?"

"Yes."

"Nationality?"

"That's a poser. I don't know what he was."

"You knew him well?"

"I met him casually, that's all. In addition to practicing law, I deal in real estate and am a renting agent. Chunder Sen rented a suite of rooms in a building which I look after, and—— But here! I told you I didn't want to talk."

"It will be to your interest to talk, Mr. Philip."

"How do you make that out?"

"It is rumored that the doctor took snap judgment when he said that Chunder Sen, as you call him, died of heart disease."

The lawyer sprang forward in his chair.

"What's that?"

Nick repeated his words.

"How do they think he died, if heart disease didn't carry him off?"

"It is hinted that he was the victim of foul play."

"Bosh! Nonsense! Half a dozen people—among them a detective on the police force—saw Chunder Sen keel over. What fool has started that theory?"

"It may be a foolish rumor, but it is going the rounds.

It will be for the benefit of all concerned to have the truth known."

"Of course! You have the truth."

"But there are details I would like to get hold of."

Philip heaved a deep breath and sank back in his chair.

"Well, go ahead with your questions," said he.

"How long have you known Chunder Sen?"

"He came here for rooms when he first struck town."

"When was that?"

"A month ago."

"How many times did you see him?"

"Oh, five or six. I didn't keep track."

"Five or six, anyway?"

"Yes."

"Once when you rented him the rooms?"

"Of course."

"And the other four or five times when you collected rent?"

"I only collect rent once a month, and he only had the rooms for a month."

"He paid in advance?"

"Yes."

"Then where and when did you see him after renting him the rooms?"

"He had some legal business to attend to and called on me."

"What sort of legal business?"

"Look here, Mr. Nicholas! Professional honor keeps me from saying anything about that."

"But in view of the circumstances——"

"I don't care anything about the circumstances! I won't breathe a whisper about Chunder Sen's business."

"Very well. Where was Chunder Sen's body taken?"

"To an old vault in Oakwoods."

"Whose vault?"

"The old Sumner vault. I rented it for the occasion."

"Why did you rent it?"

"Chunder Sen was a person of some prominence in his own country. I thought it best to hold the remains until his relatives could be heard from."

"You notified his relatives?"

"Naturally."

"Where did you send your notification?"

"To Bangkok, Siam."

"Then he was a Siamese. You said you didn't know his nationality."

"I said that because I didn't want to talk with you," the lawyer explained, but Nick Carter knew he was lying.

"Have you keys to the old Sumner vault?"

"Yes, two of them."

"Would you let me take one?"

"You intend visiting the place?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"To-morrow."

"Why do you wish to do that?"

"I may want to make a few sketches. I think I can get up a great story, and pictures will help."

"How much would you get for your story?"

"Oh, twenty-five dollars."

The lawyer leaned forward and said, in an earnest tone:

"I'll give you fifty dollars to tell your editor there's nothing in it."

"Business is business," said Nick, "and I'm going to fill this assignment. You can't buy me, Mr. Philip."

An angry light flashed into the lawyer's eyes.

"Well, you can't have the key to the vault. There are some things you prying newspaper men are not privileged to do. This is one of them."

"You refuse to help me?"

"Most decidedly."

"That will scarcely prevent me from making investigations."

"I presume not. You reporters have unlimited nerve and any amount of cheek. Good day to you, sir."

Nick got up and left the office. A grim smile played about his lips as he went down the stairs.

"Philip failed to take enough dope," he thought, "or else he took too much. Now for the cemetery commissioners."

He readily found the address of the commissioners and had little trouble, after he told who he was, in securing permission to visit the cemetery at Oakwoods at any time, night or day.

This done, he returned to his hotel.

Stopping at the desk in the office he asked if there were any letters or telegrams for "Nicholas."

The clerk handed him a letter. There was no postage stamp on the letter, and the address was in a scrawling, almost illegible hand.

"A messenger brought this?" asked Nick.

"I presume so," was the answer, "but it was not an American District Telegraph messenger, for the person who brought it did not ask for a receipt."

Nick tore open the envelope and drew out the inclosed sheet:

"NICHOLAS CARTER: You're pretty clever, but I'm onto you. If you don't clear out of Chicago, P. D. Q., you'll be shipped back to New York in a box. As for this Chunder Sen business, hands off.

"A PAL OF KENO MCCALL'S."

"Did you see the messenger who brought this?" Nick asked, turning to the clerk.

"No. I found it lying on the counter."

Nick minced the sheet and envelope into fragments and threw them into a cuspidor.

Then he went in to supper.

CHAPTER III.

THE EBONY HAND.

"What do you want?" asked the sexton of the cemetery, in a hoarse voice, as he threw open the iron gates.

It was night, and the sexton peered through the gloom at the man who stood outside and had hammered for admittance.

"I want to visit the Sumner vault," said Nick.

"No visitors allowed at this time o' night. Come to-morrer."

The sexton was about to close the gates when the detective thrust his arm through, holding a letter in his hand.

"There," said he, "read that."

Procuring a lantern, the sexton read the note.

"All right," said he, at last; "come in."

Nick passed through, and the gates closed after him with a harsh clang.

"What vault did you say?" asked the sexton.

"Sumner's."

"Follow me and I'll take you to it."

Then, along the graveled walk, weaving their way in and out among the ghostly headstones, the detective followed his guide, and finally they paused before the steel doors of a large, stone vault, set into the side of a hill.

"Is this the place?" asked Nick.

"Yes. You've got a key, I s'pose?"

"Of course."

"And a lantern?"

"Sure."

Nick brought out his small pocket electric flash light as he spoke and pressed the spring that turned on the current.

"Want me ter stay with ye?"

"It won't be necessary. Does the Sumner family own this vault now?"

"No. There's none o' the Sumner fambly left. The commissioners have took charge o' the vault."

"It isn't used very much, then?"

"Only occasionally. A man hired it last Tuesday an' that's the first time it has been used for several months. I'd jest as soon stay with ye if ye want me ter."

"I can get along alone."

The sexton went away rather reluctantly, for he was human, and had a natural curiosity to learn why a man wanted to visit the old vault at that time of night.

When his lantern had twinkled out of sight, Nick fitted a skeleton key to the lock in one of the steel doors, and after a few moments' labor he threw open the door and walked in and then turned and relocked the door behind him, putting the key in his pocket.

The air of the vault was noisome and foul, and the detective, fresh from the pure outside atmosphere, found breathing difficult, but in a few moments he became accustomed to the closeness of the place.

In the center of the vault was the coffin, mounted on a pair of somber trestles. Against the wall leaned a rough, wooden box in which the casket was to be shipped, or to be inclosed when final interment took place.

Setting down the lantern, Nick drew a small screw driver from his pocket, and with rapid, dexterous fingers he removed the screws, lifted the lid of the casket, and set it against the wall. Then he picked up the lantern and turned the light full upon the face of the dead man.

Nick Carter had nerves of steel and not a tremor passed through him as he pursued his gruesome task. The form in the casket was of medium stature, the skin of the face of a brownish hue, and the eyes were oblique, like those of the Japs and the Chinese.

Drawing down the shroud Nick searched the body for some mark of violence. He did not expect to find any such evidence, and so he was not disappointed, but as he was replacing the shroud, his quick eyes discovered a small scratch, scarce an inch in length, on the left hand, and, stooping over, he examined the scratch thoroughly.

"Wonderful!" he murmured; "and that bungling doctor couldn't see it!"

Nick Carter then gave his attention to the right hand. From a Siamese viewpoint the right hand must have been a work of art, for it was carved in a half-closed position and highly polished.

Nick tapped it with the screw driver, and, from the sound, he knew that the artificial hand was hollow. Clasping the ebony fingers he attempted to draw the hand from the arm, but without success. Next, he gave it a twist and succeeded in turning it, and half a dozen twists unfastened it entirely, and he raised up with the ebony hand in his grasp.

As he stood examining it, something fell from the inside—a scrap of white paper, which fluttered to the floor of the vault. Laying the hand down, he picked up the paper. It was folded, and, when opened, was about three inches square and bore a diagram—a simple tracing with no words of any kind in explanation. The drawing was a triangle, a "V" with the open points closed by a line. In one point of the triangle was a small circle. What could it mean?

Perplexed at this sudden development in the case, Nick sat down on one of the trestles and thought for a moment. At last he started up with an exclamation.

"This man is Yet Klomb," he thought, "there's no doubt about it. The diagram must locate the treasure chest."

Just at that moment the detective heard a stealthy footfall in the graveled path outside. Was it the sexton returning?

Slipping the paper back into the place from which it had fallen, Nick replaced the hand. By then the footsteps were at the door, and after halting for a few moments, the steps sounded up and down the front as though the man, whoever he was, was reconnoitering.

With inconceivable swiftness, Nick replaced the lid of the casket, drove home the screws, and sprang into the rough box leaning against the wall. Hardly had he hidden himself, and shut off his light, when the steps returned to the front of the vault and a key was thrust into the lock.

Presently some one entered—a man, evidently, for he cursed roundly when he filled his lungs with the foul air. The man struck a match against the stone wall and lighted a piece of candle which he took from his pocket.

Through a crack in the box, Nick could see that the man was very short in stature—probably measuring not over five and a half feet in height. He had light hair and mustache, and bore the facial characteristics of a Swede. What was the object of his visit to the vault at that hour of the night?

The detective watched the man's actions with absorbing interest.

Dropping some grease from the sputtering candle upon one the trestles, the Swede planted his candle firmly, and then attacked the lid of the casket with a screw driver. In a few moments the form of the dead man was again disclosed. Taking a handkerchief from his pocket, the Swede spread it on the floor of the vault; then he unscrewed the ebony hand very carefully and placed it on the handkerchief, tying it up securely.

Only a few moments were required to replace the coffin lid, and, after that, the Swede walked to the door, unlocked it, blew out his candle, and left the vault.

Nick Carter was not long in following. Softly using his own key, he let himself out and glided like a shadow in the man's track.

The Swede did not follow the graveled path, but broke away from it and crossed graves and dodged behind headstones until he reached the corner of the tall iron fence that bounded the cemetery. This fence he clambered over,

skulked along beside it, and, finally, came out on State Street, Nick Carter still following at a safe distance.

A trolley car happened to be approaching, and the Swede leaped on the forward platform. Nick got on the car at the rear, and watched his man for several blocks through the window, and at last, when the car came to a halt, he walked in and sat down directly opposite the man he was shadowing.

The Swede, of course, was totally unsuspicious. He left the car in the vicinity of Congress Street, walked west to State, turned north and entered a saloon not far from the old Park Theater, and, looking in from the front, Nick saw his man drop into a chair by a table and call for a drink, evidently intending to rest and refresh himself.

Hastening to a drug store across the street, the detective called up the Briggs House by telephone.

"Is Joe Murphy staying there?" he asked of the man who answered his call.

"Yes," was the reply, "he's in the billiard room now. Do you want to talk with him?"

"Yes. Please send him to the phone."

A few moments intervened, and then another voice made itself heard through the receiver.

"Who wants Murphy?"

"That you, Patsy?"

"Sure! Hello, Nick. How is everything?"

"Red-hot. Any telegrams?"

"One."

"Bring it with you and come down to the Park Theater."

"Where will you be?"

"Out in front."

"How'll I come?"

"Get yourself up in some easy rig. Stir yourself, my boy."

"I'll be there inside of twenty minutes."

Leaving the drug store, Nick walked across and stood in the entrance of the theater in such a position that he could overlook the doors of the saloon into which the Swede had gone.

"Hully chee, cull! It's a wonder youse couldn't stand right in a cove's way. D'youse own de hull sidewalk?"

Some one ran into Nick. It was Patsy, made up as a city tough, and Nick gave him a push.

"Keep your distance, you drunken loafer!" he exclaimed angrily, and started down the street.

Patsy followed.

"What's doing, Nick?" he asked.

"In this saloon on my left, at one of the front tables, there's a Swede, short and thickset. You can't miss him. Don't let him lose your eyes for an instant. I'll be at my hotel, the Metropole, and you can report there. Hand me the telegram."

"I'm next, all right," said Patsy, as he gave Nick the message.

"It may be that a pal of Keno McCall's is mixed up in this case, so be on your guard at every turn."

Patsy gave a low whistle as he turned away and entered the saloon, and Nick started up the street. Halting under the electric light, he read the telegram:

"Mr. J. Murphy, Briggs House, Chicago: Tell Nick all quiet and will be for two or three days. Investigation finished. Anything for me? Chick."

"Ah," thought Nick, "that gives me plenty of time for this case."

Stepping into a telegraph office he wired Chick to come on to Chicago at once. Then he went to the Metropole, dropping into a chair in the lobby, and remained there for two hours, smoking and straightening out the kinks in his Siamese puzzle.

Klomb had been murdered, there was not a doubt in Nick's mind about that. The deed had been done in a remarkable manner, so that the doctor had been led to attribute the Oriental's taking off to heart disease. But heart disease had had nothing to do with it. That scratch on the left hand was the sole cause.

While Nick was revolving the mystery in his mind, one of the bell boys approached and handed Nick a message.

The communication was from Patsy, and read as follows:

"Come hot-foot to Hip Lung's, No. —— State Street. This is supposed to be a laundry, but it is nothing less than a pipe joint. Patsy."

The next moment, Nick was hurrying out of the hotel.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE TRAIL.

Patsy, immediately after parting with Nick, walked directly into the saloon. He had no trouble in locating the man Nick had described, and dropped down at the table nearest the one at which the Swede was sitting. It was apparent to Patsy that the man was waiting for some one, for he sipped his beer slowly and kept an eager eye upon the door.

Any one to look at Patsy would have thought him "half-seas over," for he had sprawled over the table, had his head down in his arms, and was breathing heavily.

In the course of a few minutes a thin-faced man, with a dark mustache and pointed chin beard, came in, looked around the room leisurely, and then walked carelessly to the table where the Swede was sitting.

"Howdy, Shen," said the Swede, in a low voice, but not so low as to escape Patsy's trained ear.

"Everything O. K., Bryns?" asked the other, throwing a sharp glance in Patsy's direction.

"Bet yer life," answered Bryns, with a wicked leer. "Never mind him," he added, seeing that Shen was still looking at Patsy. "He's got a couple o' horns too many an' is dead to the world. Where's the old man?"

"Give it up. He may be at the laundry or the rooms."

"He said you'd meet me here and tell me where to find him," went on Bryns, in an angry tone.

"Don't go off the handle," said Shen, seating himself. "Brother Phil is dodging trouble."

"Trouble?"

"Well, rather. Nick Carter has shown up in Chicago——"

A startled oath came from Bryns.

"Has he got his finger in this pie?"

"*Diable!* It seems so. And he's going to get his fingers burned for his pains."

"What is he after?"

"How do I know? It may be the nigger, or it may be the diamonds. In either case—poof! Nick Carter will be taken care of."

"Where shall I pull out for?"

Bryns' anxiety had increased to a tremendous degree.

"Go to the rooms first. If Phil is there, well and good. If he isn't——"

"Well?"

"Why, if he isn't there you can leave the hand."

"Not on yer life, Shen!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that before I give up this hand I get money fer it. See? I've taken all the risk, so far."

"Bah! You don't know what you're talking about."

"Don't fool yerself. You an' yer brother get the swag, but I'm not going to let go my grip on this piece of ebony until Phil comes down good an' plenty. That's flat."

"You'll be treated square, Bryns."

"That is no dream. I intend to know that, though, before I give up what I hold. I'm standin' pat with this hand, Shen."

"Well, it's you and Phil for it. If you don't find my brother at the rooms, and don't want to leave the hand there, go to the laundry——"

"The pipe joint, you mean, eh?"

"We call it the laundry," was the sharp response. "Chances are you'll find Phil at one place or the other, and will be able to make terms. That's all. Slide away, now. Sharp's the word if we get ahead of Carter."

They both got up, and as they moved toward the door they continued to converse, but what they said escaped Patsy.

When they were clear of the saloon, the young detective started after them. At the street corner the two rascals separated, and Patsy took the Swede's trail, shadowed him to Cottage Grove Avenue and saw him take a street car.

The detective was not near enough to board the same car, but was fortunate in finding a taxicab whose driver was looking for a fare.

"Keep me in sight of that street car," said Patsy, leaping into the taxi.

"That's dead easy," returned the driver, and he proved as good as his word.

Through the front of the cab Patsy kept his eyes on the car, and whenever it stopped the driver of the vehicle slackened pace, and the detective was able to see whoever got off.

For twenty minutes the peculiar chase was kept up, and then Bryns came out on the rear platform of the car, got down on the lower step, and dropped off.

Patsy halted the cab at the corner, leaped out, handed the driver a bill, and took after the Swede.

In that part of the city, Cottage Grove Avenue runs at an oblique angle to the other streets. A triangular-shaped building stood on one of the corners, the first story occupied by a drug store. Back of the drug store was a hallway, and into this the Swede turned, ascended a flight of stairs, and halted in front of a door.

The detective had noiselessly ascended the stairs, close after the Swede, and on reaching the top of the flight, he saw his man take a key from his pocket, open the door, and vanish from sight.

A gaslight burned dimly in the hall, and Patsy passed to the farther end of the corridor and waited for his man to reappear. He could hear no sound of conversation in the room the Swede had entered, so he was fairly certain that the man had not found the person he was seeking.

In a few moments the Swede came out into the hall, muttering to himself, locked the door, and went down the stairs, the detective close at his heels. When a northbound train came along, Bryns jumped aboard, and Patsy took the car behind.

At Van Buren Street Bryns got off the train and walked hurriedly westward to State Street; then he turned south for a block or two, and finally dived down into a basement.

On reaching the basement stairs down which the Swede had vanished, the detective saw a red-and-yellow sign bearing this inscription: "Hip Lung, Laundry."

"Here's where we begin to get developments," said he to himself; "Bryns is down there, and possibly Shen and the man Shen referred to as 'Brother Phil.' It will be just as well to put Nick next."

There was a messenger office near and Patsy made for it and soon had his message on the way to Nick, at the Metropole; then he returned to Hip Lung's establishment and descended the steps.

CHAPTER V.

A LITTLE FINE WORK.

Two loud knocks fell on the door of Hip Lung's place of business. It was Nick who gave the summons, and he was not many minutes behind Patsy. The knocks failed to secure an answer, and with a muttered exclamation, the detective kicked and pounded on the door until a light appeared and a yellow-faced Mongolian looked out.

"What you wantee?"

"What do you suppose I want, my festive rat eater? I don't rap on this side of the door when I want to get out of the house. Let me in."

"No takee washee now. Hip Lung he bad sick. Go 'way."

"Not much, my gay heathen. No laundry in mine. I just want a couple of hits at the pipe, and I'm going to get what I come for, savvy?"

"Go 'way, Melican man No smokee pipe here."

"We'll see about that," and in an instant Nick had forced his way past the Chinaman and was standing in the narrow corridor.

Nick had made some changes in his clothing, and both in manner and appearance was very different from the character he had assumed during his work of the preceding day.

Seeing that he had a stubborn customer to deal with —one who evidently knew the ropes so far as the "laundry" was concerned—the Chinaman scowled and led the way to a luxuriously furnished room in the rear. In this room were two persons engaged in what is technically known as "hitting the pipe." The opium smokers lay on two low, plush divans, their little glimmering lamps mounted on Turkish tables beside them.

One of the smokers was Patsy, as Nick saw at a glance. Patsy was smoking in a languid way, and the meaning glance that passed between him and his chief proved that he was far from succumbing to the influence of the potent drug.

The other smoker was the Swede. Apparently he was in the opium smoker's seventh heaven. His head was thrown back, and his eyes were closed. The amber stem

of the pipe was in his mouth, but no smoke curled upward from his slightly parted lips.

"Gettee down on couch," said the Chinaman, waving his hand toward one of the couches, "and me blingee you one-piecee smoke."

There were few disguises which the sharp eyes of Nick Carter could not penetrate. Consequently, he was not long in discovering that the supposed Chinaman was merely made up for the occasion, and although the make-up was fairly good, the "pidgin" English was not what it ought to be.

Nick, however, laid himself down on the couch while the Chinaman left the room to secure the smoking paraphernalia.

The exit of the "Chinaman" was the signal for Patsy to drop his pipe, sit up, and use his fingers to communicate his thoughts, after the manner of the deaf and dumb.

This is what Patsy said:

"I came in here half an hour ago. The Swede took me out on Cottage Grove Avenue, where he went looking for a man named Philip; not finding the man, he came here and got in ahead of me. As I came in, I heard low and angry talk. Taking a pipe, I pretended to smoke and get dopy, and the angry talk, that had stopped when I came in, was taken up again. In a short time the Swede, and a man who met him in the saloon where I took the trail, came through the door by which that fake Chinaman just left us. Apparently their anger was over, and they were the best of friends. The Swede lay down for a smoke, and the other man left the place. Keep your eye on the Swede; there's something wrong with him."

Just then the supposed Chinaman was heard returning and Nick nodded to Patsy and dropped back on the couch, but before the other man got in, however, Patsy swept all the opium out of the little jar by the lamp, using the ivory "dipper."

"You wantee long 'smoke?" asked the fake Chinaman.

"Just as long as you make 'em, my pig-tail friend."

In a short time Nick was seemingly puffing at the pipe and enjoying himself; but he proceeded in such a manner that the narcotic had no effect on him.

"Here, Charlie," cried Patsy, "more opium!"

"You wantee more?"

"That's what I said."

The Chinaman looked into the empty jar with a puzzled expression on his parchmentlike face.

Finally he trotted out of the room, the empty jar in his hands. Nick, of course, knew that Patsy had done this in order to give them a chance to examine the Swede, and as soon as they were left alone, Nick sprang to the Swede's side.

Something in the man's face aroused the detective's suspicions, and he laid his ear against the breast. The heart had stopped beating. The Swede was dead! Here was a new phase of the mystery.

Lifting the Swede's right hand, Nick saw that there was a scratch along one of the fingers similar to the one he had seen on the hand of Yet Klomb.

"What's up?" said Patsy.

Nick drew a finger across his throat and threw up his hands, thus mutely answering the question. Then, quick as a wink, the detective's hands sought the dead man's breast pocket, where, with his own eyes, he had seen the Swede place the ebony hand. It was not there. Who had taken it?

After a moment's thought, Nick drew his revolver and dropped down behind the couch, and hardly had he accomplished this when the man reëntered the room.

Failing to notice that his second customer was not on his couch, he walked over to Patsy with the replenished jar of opium.

"Come here!" called Nick.

The Chinaman turned to find himself looking into the muzzle of a revolver.

"What do you mean?" he demanded, in his surprise forgetting all about his "pidgin" English.

"Just what I say," returned Nick coolly. "Come here!"

The man slowly advanced to the side of the couch.

"Whatee you want?" he asked, recovering himself.

"Draw up your right sleeve."

The sleeve was pulled back, and Nick saw that the forearm was literally covered with minute black dots where the point of a "hypoderm" had pierced the skin.

"Draw up the other sleeve," said Nick.

The other sleeve was pulled up.

"What have you done with it, Hip Lung?" inquired Nick.

"Me no sqvvy," was the reply.

"No? I guess you do. I want it."

"Wantee what?"

"That ebony hand."

"You clazy! Me no gottee ebony hand. Me gottee hand allee samee like yours."

"Listen here, Hip Lung," went on Nick. "When that Swede there was well under the influence of opium you removed a package from his pocket. The package was wrapped in a red handkerchief. Hand it over. Come, now! I've no time to waste."

Nick did not care to complicate matters, just then, by having Philip, for, of course, that is who the Chinaman was, know that he believed the Swede to be dead.

As Philip looked into the glittering eyes shining along the barrel of the revolver, he knew that it would be better for him to comply with the detective's request.

Shrugging his shoulders, he produced the package wrapped in the handkerchief from the breast of his shirt.

"That's right," said Nick grimly. "Are you in the habit of robbing all your customers after they are under the influence of the drug?"

Philip smiled blandly, but made no audible response.

"Do you see that corner over there?" went on Nick.

"Me no blind," was the cheerful reply.

"I suppose not. Go over there and turn your face to the wall. Don't look around or stir a peg for five minutes."

The disguised man obeyed at once.

"Watch this fellow," Nick motioned off to Patsy; "shadow him when he leaves this place. He is Philip, the man you heard the others speak of."

Patsy motioned back "All right," and Nick picked up the lamp and retraced his way to the front door. Leaving the lamp on a chair, he let himself out of the door, and hurried up the steps and off down the street.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CAT AND THE MOUSE.

"Gentleman to see you, sir."

Billy, the office boy, again.

"All right, Billy," said Philip. "Who is he?"

"Didn't give his name, but he's the same fellow that was here yesterday."

"The reporter?"

"Looks like he might be a reporter."

A frown gathered about the lawyer's brows.

"Tell him I'm out."

"I just told him you were in."

"Tell him I won't see him."

"I'll save Billy the trouble of telling me that, Mr. Philip," came the detective's voice from behind the office boy.

Nick had followed Billy to the door of the private office, and he now pushed past the boy into the room.

"Don't want to talk with you," cried Philip hotly; "don't want to have anything to say to you."

"I've found out something——"

"I don't care what you've found out. Leave this room!"

The lawyer was nervous and fidgety, as Nick could plainly see. His work the night before had evidently worn upon him. His cheeks were pale, and there were heavy dark circles about his eyes.

Nick seated himself calmly.

"You don't mean that," said he. "You can't afford to antagonize the press, Mr. Philip."

The lawyer dropped back in his chair and glared at the detective.

"I'm just piecing out my story for the Sunday edition," went on Nick. "I called at the vault——"

"You did?"

The lawyer's query came in an eager tone.

"Sure," said Nick. "Went to the vault, but the hand was gone. I wanted to make a sketch of that hand, Mr. Philip."

"Well," said the lawyer shortly, "if it wasn't there you couldn't do it."

"Right you are. After I left the cemetery, Mr. Philip, I had a very peculiar adventure."

"Ah!"

The lawyer's interest was again uppermost.

"Yes. At a Chinese opium joint on State Street."

A sudden pallor darted into the lawyer's face, but he said nothing, and Nick continued:

"My investigations led me into the opium den, which, by the way, is run by a yellow-faced knave known as Hip Lung. He is as villainous a cutthroat as ever left the Flowery Kingdom. When Hip Lung's customers are sleeping from the effects of the opium, it is his custom to rob them. I detected him in a job of that kind last night and forced him to give up something which, I am sure, is the missing hand of Chunder Sen."

Nick drew from his pocket the small parcel wrapped in the red handkerchief, and for an instant, Philip's eyes grew glassy and his breath came in short, labored gasps. But with a strong effort he recovered himself and met the detective's gaze with outward calmness.

Slowly and carefully Nick removed the handkerchief.

"That's it" exclaimed the lawyer.

"You have seen the hand often?"

"Naturally. I told you before that Chunder Sen and I had business relations."

"I wonder if you ever saw this before?"

Nick drew out the scrap of paper bearing the triangular diagram.

Philip started.

"Yes," he said; "Sen showed that to me."

"Did he tell you what it meant?"

"He did. It is a cabalistic design made use of by a secret society in Siam of which Chunder Sen was a member."

The lawyer lied very easily.

"Oh!" exclaimed Nick. "I was in hopes that it had some bearing on the murder. As it has not, however, it is of no further use to me. As you were a friend of Chunder Sen's, I will leave the hand with you."

The lawyer's eyes dilated perceptibly as the detective tucked the bit of paper into the hand and laid the missing member on the desk.

"I'll get a tiptop story out of this," said Nick, rising, "even if I can't prove that there was a murder committed."

"Rather strange that you should discover the hand to be missing, and, so soon afterward, go right to the place where the hand had been taken, and there recover it."

There was a suspicious gleam in Philip's eyes as he spoke.

"A reporter runs across a good many strange things," Nick answered carelessly.

"I suppose so," returned the lawyer.

Nick went away.

"Check," he muttered grimly, as he descended the stairs. "I have given him rope enough to tie himself all up. Let's see if he does it."

At the foot of the stairs a young tough was lounging, his hands in his pockets.

"Don't let him lose you, Patsy," said Nick, pausing a moment.

"He'll be a good one, if he does."

"Whereabouts was it on Cottage Grove Avenue you followed the Swede last night?"

Patsy gave the number and Nick went out, turning in the direction of his hotel and proceeding at a rapid pace.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NEWSPAPER PERSONAL.

When Nick reached his room he drew a map of the city from his pocket and spread it out on the table; then, from memory, he drew the diagram which he had found in the ebony hand on a piece of paper, and laid it beside the map.

"Now for a little headwork," he muttered, as he leaned over the map. "Here's the number on Cottage Grove Avenue to which Patsy shadowed the Swede, and——"

A peculiar rap fell on the door.

Nick opened it, and a young fellow in plaid coat and trousers, a white stiff hat perched jauntily over his right eyebrow, and a diamond as big as the Kohinoor in his shirt front, stepped across the threshold.

Nick looked up and down the hall, and then closed the door.

"Well, Chick, you didn't let any grass grow under your feet in getting here."

"No, I hustled. Thought you might need me."

"Any developments in that resurrectionist case?"

"Nothing much. I'll write out my report. No use looking for anything in that direction for a couple of days yet."

"Glad of that. By then this Yet Klomb case will be off our hands."

"How does it pan?"

"Rather complicated. But I'm working down to bed rock. One of Keno McCall's pals is concerned in the case."

"Bully! We've wiped out McCall, and now if we can wipe out his pals it will make a clear slate. By the way, here's something that may or may not interest you. It caught my eyes in the 'Personal' column of a morning paper."

Chick drew a newspaper from his pocket and handed it over. One of the personals was marked and Nick read it. It ran as follows:

"PERSONAL.—Chenevieux: Ebony hand—basement—to-night—ten. PHILIPPE."

"That fits into the case like a keystone in an arch!" exclaimed Nick. "This Chenevieux murdered Yet Klomb. Look at that peculiar design, Chick. What do you take it for?"

Nick handed his assistant the scrap of paper on which he had drawn the diagram.

"Looks like a plan of some sort," said Chick. "That small circle may represent something that the drawing seeks to locate."

"Right! I'm glad to see that your opinion coincides with my own."

"What does the circle stand for?"

"The chest of diamonds."

Chick whistled.

"And what's the rest of the diagram?"

"It's the plan of a house—of the basement of a house, according to this personal."

Nick made a few explanations to clear the matter for his assistant.

"I see," said Chick. "That's a peculiarly shaped house."

"Therefore easily identified. Look at this city map. This is Cottage Grove Avenue running obliquely to the southeast. East and West Streets cross it at a sharp angle and make a house of this shape a possibility."

Nick placed his finger on the map.

"See that corner, right there? It was to that building that Patsy followed one of our suspects last night. Go to your room and get into a little quieter costume, Chick. Then come back. I have something on for this afternoon."

Chick soon returned, his appearance suggesting a cross between a well-to-do business man and a Methodist minister.

"That's O. K.," said Nick; "now let's be off."

At the end of half an hour the two detectives found themselves in front of a corner drug store. A hasty survey of the outside of the building showed that its plan agreed with that drawn on the slip, being triangular in shape, and having the corner that faced the two streets rounded off for a doorway.

Entering the store, the detectives were met by a short man with red side whiskers and mustache, who advanced behind the counter and asked what they wanted.

"Who owns this building?" Nick asked.

"I don't know."

"A Mr. Philip has the renting of it, hasn't he?"

"Yes."

"Well, I was told that the property is for sale. We have called to look it over."

At these words a startled look crossed the druggist's face.

"Ah—er—are you certain that Philip said it was for sale?"

"Certainly, sir," answered Nick. "We would like to see the basement. Will you show us the way downstairs?"

"Certainly, gentlemen. This way. I'll get a lamp for you."

The druggist got an oil lamp.

"You need not come with us," said Nick, as he took the lamp. "My friend and I can make our examination alone."

"Be careful, gentlemen," warned the druggist. "I use the basement for a storeroom, and there are some explosive liquids down there."

"Don't worry. We're not overanxious to pass in our checks, so we'll have a care."

Opening the door, the detectives descended the narrow stairs, and the druggist held the door open until they reached the bottom and then turned away so hurriedly that he neglected to close it entirely.

Giving the lamp to Chick, Nick swiftly and silently ascended the stairs and peered out. He finally rejoined his companion, laughing softly to himself.

"What's up?" asked Chick.

"The druggist ran out the front door as though the Old Boy was after him."

"He's probably suspicious about something. You're playing a deep game, Nick."

"It's a curious game. The druggist evidently wants to buy the property for himself. Thinking it will be sold out of his hands, he has rushed off to see Philip."

"Philip, eh? Then he'll give away the fact that we visited the basement."

"Precisely. That's what I want him to do."

Chick emitted a long whistle.

"You see," went on Nick, turning his attention to the surroundings, "that our diagram represents this basement, without a doubt. We are now standing in the southwest corner, and over there is the particular spot represented by that little circle. If I'm not away off in my reckoning, we're close to that chest of diamonds."

"How did Yet Klomb happen to bury it here?"

"He rented rooms in this building."

"I see. He was a stranger in a strange country, and that chest was an elephant on his hands."

The floor about the place in which the two detectives were standing was partly filled with barrels, casks, and large bottles in wooden cases. A space several yards square in the southwest corner was cleared, however, and, while Chick was talking, Nick had been searching around among the barrels. At last he rejoined his assistant, carrying an iron rod about three feet long in his hand. Then Nick began pushing the rod down through the earth floor in several places, and as he worked, a perplexed expression overspread his face.

"I'll take it all back," he said, at last, throwing the rod away. "That box isn't here, after all."

"Perhaps you didn't go deep enough?"

"Yes, I did. Yet Klomb came to the box frequently, you may rest assured, so he put it where it was convenient to get at. However, the belief that the treasure chest is here will probably be all that is necessary to help us run down the murderer."

Stepping into a small room partitioned off from the rest

of the basement, Nick examined the walls. The room contained one narrow window opening upon a passageway between the rear of the drug store and another building.

"Can you get through that window, Chick?"

"Sure."

"Bear its location in mind. You may have to use it the next time you visit this place."

"What's the matter with coming through the drug store?"

"It won't be best."

Ascending the stairs, Nick turned out the light and left the lamp with a clerk, and as he did so, he noticed, with grim satisfaction, that the druggist had not yet returned.

"Where is the gentleman with the auburn whiskers?" the detective asked of the young man back of the counter.

"I don't know, sir. He hurried away and said he'd be back in an hour."

"Do you remember a little, yellow-skinned man that used to have a room upstairs?"

"Yes, I remember him," answered the clerk. "He was an amateur photographer."

"He was, eh?"

"Sure. Used to go down into the basement where it was dark so's he could put plates in his plate holders, an' develop his pictures, and all that."

"Ah! Does he live upstairs now?"

"No; he's dead."

"What did he call himself?"

"Chunder Sen."

"Foreigner, wasn't he?"

"Uh-huh. Siamese."

"Did he ever have any visitors?"

The clerk began to show signs of wonder at all this questioning.

"The only visitor he ever had was Mr. Philip. He came here real often."

"You know Mr. Philip, do you?"

"Pretty well. He often steps in here and buys——"

The clerk closed up abruptly.

"Morphine?" finished Nick, with a slight smile.

"How did you know that?" the clerk demanded.

"If you don't know you'll never tell. Come on, Charlie," Nick added to Chick, turning and leaving the store.

Chick could see the clerk watching them with astonished eyes as they left.

"Jupiter!" exclaimed Chick. "You played that wide open, old man."

"Of course. That clerk was pretty thick, and if I hadn't played it wide open he wouldn't have caught on."

"You wanted to put him next, then?"

"Yes. I'm doing everything I can to coax Philip out here. I called and gave him that ebony hand with the diagram inside of it. He already knows that I am not a reporter, as I pretended to be, but he thinks I'm slow. That personal proves that he is coming to the basement and going to bring his pal with him."

"What is Philip coming to the basement for?"

"Why, to get that chest. When the proprietor of the drug store gets to Philip's office and tells him two men went down into the basement to look it over, friend Philip will be wild. And he'll get wilder when the drug-store man describes me."

"How was Yet Klomb put out of the way?"

"Just as Bryns, the Swede, was put out of the way. A handshake did the trick."

"Handshake?"

"Nothing else."

"An easy way to get rid of an enemy."

"We're dealing with Frenchmen, in this case. The contrivance used in the two murders is a French contrivance, and is known as a prussic thimble."

"I never heard of it."

"No? Well, it's simple and entirely effective. The thimble is worn on a finger of the right hand and has a sharp, needlelike point extending a quarter of an inch from the top. The needle is hollow and the upper part of the thimble is filled with prussic acid. In shaking hands, you scratch the hand that clasps yours. The result is death in a very few minutes."

When Nick and Chick got back to the hotel, they passed Patsy waiting in the office, and Nick made an expressive movement of the head as he and his assistant went on to the elevator.

In a short time Patsy joined the other two in Nick's room.

"I was expecting you, Patsy. What have you to report?"

"About half an hour ago a man with red hair, mustache, and wind teasers on the side, rushed into Philip's office, closing the door of the room behind him."

"Could you tap the conversation?"

"No. I hung around where I could see what took place in the outer room of the office, and pretty quick the red-whiskered man dashed out and Philip appeared in the door of the private room, flushed and excited. He called the office boy, who went into the private office and presently came out with a letter. I collided with the boy in the hall, knocked the letter out of his hand, and picked it up for him. That letter was for the man 'Shen,' and the number was the same as that of Hip Lung's laundry."

"You got the letter?"

"Sure. The office boy wanted to soldier a little, and I walked along the street at his side, made friends with him, and told him I'd deliver the letter, as I was going directly past the place."

"Good."

Hastily tearing open the envelope, Nick drew out the inclosed sheet and read as follows:

"Yours answering personal at hand. Don't go to the store at ten o'clock to-night. Look out for peelers. I'm all right, but I believe Nick Carter is after you or somebody else. I can't understand him. He's either a fool or the sharpest sleuth in the United States. P. P."

"Chick," said Nick, "you and Patsy go out to that basement so you'll get there not later than eight-thirty, or nine. Conceal yourselves and await developments. Chenevieux—'Shen' for short, you understand—will show up there as sure as fate. Nail him. I'm going to attempt a piece of fine work and think I can pull it off."

"What's that?"

"Force a confession from Monsieur Philippe, otherwise Mr. Philip. Stay here until time to start south. It's possible you may hear from me before you leave."

"Why not copper his little game at the address on that envelope?" asked Patsy.

Chick winked at Nick, and both gave Patsy a humorous glance.

"Chenevieux isn't within a mile of that address, Patsy.

I don't think him a very sharp criminal, but he's altogether too sharp for that, and so is Philip. Go to the basement—that's your cue."

Thereupon Nick left the room, taking Philip's letter with him.

CHAPTER VIII.

LOGICAL CONCLUSIONS.

With Billy, the office boy, absent on a supposed errand, the outer office of Paul Philip, attorney, was left unattended, and, entering as softly as he could, Nick Carter made his way into the private office without being seen or heard. Philip was seated at his desk, and the first intimation he had that there was a caller was given by a forced cough at his elbow. Then the lawyer sprang to his feet with a startled exclamation:

"What do you mean by entering my office in this manner?"

"There was no one outside to announce me," answered Nick coolly. "You seem to have forgotten that you sent your office boy to deliver this letter."

The detective handed the letter to the lawyer, who turned red and pale by turns. At last he gasped:

"Where did you get that?"

"That doesn't count. I got it and I have read it."

"You wouldn't dare!" gritted the lawyer.

"Wouldn't I?" retorted Nick. "The writing of such letters as that is a bad practice—especially between criminals of your stamp."

"Sir! You will have the kindness to take yourself out of this office. It seems that you come here merely to insult me."

"You are mistaken, Hip Lung—I beg your pardon, Monsieur Philippe—I should have said. Mr. Philip."

For an instant the lawyer sat in his chair, rigid as a stone image. Then he threw one hand behind him, while a swift gleam of resolution darted through his eyes.

"Careful, Mr. Philip!" warned Nick, drawing a revolver with the quickness of lightning and covering the man before him. "You are reaching for your gun. Take it from your pocket, but don't attempt to use it; hand it to me."

"I have no gun," returned Philip, moistening his dry lips with his tongue.

"Oh, yes, you have; out with it."

With a muttered curse, the lawyer jerked a revolver from his pocket and threw it on the floor at Nick's feet.

"We are going into tragics," said Philip, "and I cannot understand what your purpose is in coming here. For a reporter your actions are very peculiar, to say the least."

"Oh, cut that out. You know who I am, well enough, and have known it ever since my first call here."

"All right, Mr. Nicholas Carter. Oblige me by making known your errand and taking your departure."

"You'll discover my business quick enough. And when I leave this office you go with me."

"I shall not go with you."

Before many minutes had passed, Nick had occasion to recall these words.

"We'll see about that later. I merely dropped in this afternoon to tell you a little story."

"Tell your story. I am at your mercy now, but remember, there will come a time of reckoning."

"Just as surely as you sit there in that chair!" declared Nick impressively.

"The story I have to tell is of a crime, wherein one thief laid his plans to pluck another, and had to commit two murders in order to accomplish his purpose. In carrying out his plans, the lawyer in the case had to have help, and he ranged on his side an individual even more unscrupulous than himself—a rascal who had been a pal of Keno McCall's."

"But to go on with the yarn. There were two Frenchmen, both of whom had lived in the United States so long that one had entirely lost his French accent, while the other spoke with an accent that was barely perceptible.

"One of these Frenchmen, whom we will call Paul Philippe——"

"Do you refer to me?" interrupted the attorney.

"If you find the cap fits, wear it. This Philippe anglicized his name into Philip, studied for the bar, and, in due time, was admitted. He opened his office, and his principal work, for some time, was in getting his brother out of all sorts of shady transactions through legal quibbles and technicalities. He was one of the lawyers who defended Keno McCall, and was known, in the ranks of the evildoers, as the criminals' friend.

"But Philip wasn't making money enough. His brother divided with him the profits on various jobs, but the amounts were small, and Philip wanted to reach out for a big winning, shake the dust of America from his feet, and return to France. Chance favored him. A royal rogue, who had slipped away from his native Siam with a chest of diamonds belonging to the king of the country, was thrown across Philip's path. The name of this royal rascal was Yet Klomb, but he disguised himself and took the name of Chunder Sen. With all his disguising, however, Klomb could not change his yellow face nor replace his ebony right hand with a real flesh-and-blood article.

"This Yet Klomb was rather clever, in a way. He got his chest of diamonds past the customs authorities in New York, duty free, and pushed on to Chicago. When he got to Chicago he wanted rooms, and fate threw him into the hands of the renting agent, Paul Philip, who rented Klomb some rooms in a building on Cottage Grove Avenue, and, feeling that there was something wrong with the stranger, the lawyer watched him.

"Very shortly, Klomb came to Philip for legal advice. He may have wanted to know if he could be extradited. Anyhow, that call enabled Philip to get a line on Yet Klomb. The papers were full of particulars regarding the theft of the chest of diamonds from the King of Siam. Philip, naturally, read these accounts, suspected that his client was the man who had stolen the goods, and began to cultivate him. What the lawyer wanted was that chest of jewels. But where had the chest been put? It was not in the rooms of the so-called Chunder Sen, for Philip had been often in the rooms and had searched for it, unknown to the royal thief.

"From the druggist, who had a store in the first story of the building where Chunder Sen had his rooms, Philip learned that the Siamese went often to the basement for the ostensible purpose of using it as a dark room for photographic operations——"

The lawyer had so far listened with a stolid face. But at this point he stirred uneasily and gave vent to a muttered exclamation. Nick went on, however, without seeming to notice Philip's nervousness.

"Then it struck the lawyer that the chest must be hidden in the basement, under the drug store. But where? That was a point Philip could not settle. Philip's actions aroused suspicion in the mind of Chunder Sen, and it became necessary for the Siamese to be put out of the way.

"Chenevieux was delighted to do the job. Philip and Chunder Sen were walking together along the street, they encountered Chenevieux, and Chenevieux was introduced to the Siamese. In shaking hands, Chenevieux gave Sen the wound that presently caused him to fall dead on the street, apparently from heart disease. The death wound was caused by a weapon first invented in France, during the siege of Paris in 1870-71."

"Good heavens" cried Philip, sinking back in his chair and mopping the cold perspiration from his forehead. "How could you—how could any mortal man—discover that?"

"My familiarity with that murderous French device showed me what the other detective and even the doctor who made the post-mortem could not discover. The scratch on the hand revealed the mystery. Thus I knew that Frenchmen must have done the work, for this is the first time I have encountered the prussic thimble in an American crime.

"I was employed by agents of the King of Siam to find the chest of diamonds, and, when I traced Yet Klomb to Chicago, I had no idea that a murder mystery would be developed, or that I should come in contact with a pal of Keno McCall's."

Philip dropped his head in his hands, and his body shook as with a palsy.

"I called on you as a reporter. You suspected me, and when I left sent an anonymous communication warning me to keep hands off. I told you I was going to the vault in the cemetery, and you had the Swede, Bryns, go there, as you thought, ahead of me. I was there when Bryns came and removed the ebony hand, wrapped it in a handkerchief, and went away with it. I followed the Swede to the saloon and turned him over to one of my assistants. We were thus led to the laundry, or rather to the place which you call a laundry, and run on the side as a fence for your nefarious operations with Shen. I found the Swede dead and the ebony hand gone. The Swede was Shen's second victim, and again the prussic thimble had got in its work.

"You thought you were not recognized in that chink get-up, Philip, but you were. I wasn't ready yet to have you know that I was next to your game, hence my reason for bringing that hand to you, with the paper containing the diagram inside. The hand was of no use to me, for I had learned all I could from the diagram.

"You did not tell Chenevieux of this drawing locating the chest, fearing he would take it and cheat you out of the secreted treasure. I have cleared away all points except one, and that is: how you learned the diagram was in the ebony hand. But that is a minor point. You had that suggested to you, or learned about it in some way while searching through Chunder Sen's effects in his rooms.

"Shen had a steadier nerve, and, if you had taken him into your confidence, you would have avoided the necessity of hiring the Swede to visit the cemetery, as you thought, ahead of me, and then murdering him in your rendezvous, Hip Lung's opium joint.

"Accused of two murders, I hold incontestable proofs against you; and both you and your confederate, Shen, will take seats in the electric chair."

"In Heaven's name," cried the lawyer hoarsely, struggling to his feet and staggering against the desk like a drunken man, "are you man or devil that you have looked through this affair and brought the blackness so miraculously to light?"

With ashen face and glassy eyes, Philip clutched gropingly at the top of the desk for support, and then fell heavily back into his chair.

"Ruined, ruined!" he groaned. "The dread secret is out, just when I was beginning to think I was safe."

His form shook for a moment with suppressed emotion and then he leaned eagerly forward, a faint light of hope gleaming in his wild eyes.

"See here, Carter," he breathed quickly, "I never wronged you. You can save me. I will give you half the diamonds in that chest if you will go back to New York and say nothing."

"No, you don't," said Nick.

"Half the diamonds," persisted the lawyer frantically; "think of it! It's a fortune, man!"

"That will do. I could have every diamond in the chest, if I wanted them; you haven't got the chest and you'll not get it. The King of Siam hired me and he's going to get his treasure back again. I shall be satisfied with the fee he pays me."

The lawyer struck his hands hopelessly against his forehead and sank back.

"But I'll tell you what you can do," went on Nick, leaning toward the wretch; "make a full confession in writing—tell everything, sign it with your own hand, and I will do my best to save you from the chair."

"And Shen—what will become of him?"

"He'll have to suffer for what he has done. Will you make the confession or not?"

Nick drew a pair of handcuffs from his pocket, and the sight of the come-alongs seemed to settle the point.

"I'll do it."

The lawyer's face grew resolute and his fear fled. He looked an altogether different man as he turned to his desk, picked up a pen, and steadily wrote out a history of his crime.

"There," he said, with strange calmness, whirling around in his chair after ten minutes' work. "It is finished and signed."

During the writing, the office boy had returned and now stood looking into the room with wildly distended eyes.

"Come in, Billy," said Nick Carter.

The boy obeyed.

"Paul Philippe," went on the detective solemnly, "do you here and now declare that that writing is a true statement?"

"I do."

"Sign that paper, Billy, as a witness."

This the boy did, and Nick Carter then affixed his own name to the confession.

"What next?" queried the lawyer.

"Next, I shall have to ask you to accompany me to the police station."

"I would like to ask a favor of you, Mr. Carter."

"What is it?"

"My nerves are all unstrung, which, perhaps, is no more

than natural for one in my position. Will you allow me to brace myself up with a little morphine?"

"Certainly."

It took the lawyer but a moment to roll up his sleeve, and as he inserted the sharp point of the hypoderm in the flesh of the forearm and pressed on the piston, a light of wild triumph leaped from his eyes. Then plucking the instrument from his arm, Philip threw it across the room.

The detective picked it up with a startled exclamation. It was not the same instrument he had seen on the lawyer's desk the day before, and the liquid now injected was not morphine.

"Billy," said Nick, "run for a doctor. Quick, boy!"

"Too late, Nicholas Carter," cried Philip, "too late. I have foiled you, and I have foiled the law as the last act of a miserable career. Better death than the electric chair—or even the penitentiary." Throwing his hands wildly into the air, the lawyer dropped to the floor.

Kneeling beside him, Nick took a handkerchief and tied it about the arm above the point where it had received the poison. He then took a ruler from the desk, thrust it through the handkerchief and twisted it as tightly as he could in order to prevent the blood, if possible, from reaching the heart and spreading through the system.

"I tell you it is too late, Carter," said the lawyer, in a husky voice. "I injected enough poison into that arm to kill a dozen men. You were not quick enough with your tourniquet. Already I feel a numbness stealing over my brain and benumbing my senses. I have carried that loaded syringe about me ever since Yet Klomb was killed—I wanted it handy for just such an emergency as this. Foiled, Nick Carter—for once in your life."

Just then Billy came in with the doctor.

"Look at this man," said Nick to the doctor, "and let me know if there is any chance to pull him through."

"What is the matter with him?"

"He has injected prussic acid into his arm."

"With this syringe?" asked the doctor, picking up the instrument from the floor where Nick had dropped it.

"Yes."

"Was it full?"

"It was," put in Philip exultantly.

"Then there's no use trying to do anything for him. You might as well remove that handkerchief. The poison is all through his system. I can detect it in that peculiar color of his face. He has only a few minutes to live."

"Bear witness, doctor," continued the lawyer, "that I have done this with my own hand."

The doctor nodded, and Nick removed the handkerchief and arose from the dying man's side.

"Billy," he said, "run over to the City Hall and get the chief of police. Tell him Nick Carter wants him at once."

The boy hurried away, and as he did so, Nick and the doctor lifted the lawyer upon a couch in the room, the doctor seating himself near with his fingers on the man's pulse.

Nick paced the room reflectively. His one wish was that the chief of police would arrive before the lawyer died, and his wish was gratified.

"Chief," said Nick, as that official entered, "that man on the couch there is dying. He injected prussic acid into his arm and the doctor says there is not a shadow of hope for him. Please step to his side. I want you to hear his last words."

The chief obeyed, a puzzled look on his face.

"Philip," went on Nick, "here is the chief of police, and I wish to ask you, in his presence, if Yet Klomb, otherwise Chunder Sen, died from a natural cause?"

"He did not."

"He was killed?"

"Yes."

"Who killed him?"

"Myself and Chenevieux. It is all set down in my written confession. Do not torture me with any further questions on the subject."

"Is this the confession you speak of?"

Nick held up the paper.

"Hold it closer," returned Philip; "I can hardly see."

The detective did as requested.

"Yes, that is it."

Nick turned to the doctor.

"Is this man in his right mind?"

"He is," was the decided reply.

"Take this," said the detective, handing the written confession to the officer. "Before long I shall have the pleasure of turning the man Chenevieux over to you."

Nick started for the door, and had soon left the office and the building. It was late in the afternoon, and, as he felt that matters were well taken care of, he returned to his hotel, had supper, and started for Cottage Grove Avenue about nine o'clock. He did not care to interfere with the work he had delegated to Chick and Patsy, but he decided to make assurance doubly sure by being in the vicinity of the building when the murderer was finally run to earth, so alighting from the street car, he took up his position in a dark doorway directly across the street.

The red, green, and yellow lights of the drug store shone out through the large windows, and Nick could see the red-whiskered proprietor of the establishment sitting in an easy-chair, still waiting for customers, late as it was.

Casting his eyes toward the basement window that opened upon Cottage Grove Avenue, the detective sought for a light and listened for sounds of a commotion, for this was the southwest room. As he gazed, he heard the muffled "crack" of a pistol, and started across the street at a run. He had barely reached the center of the thoroughfare when there came a terrific crash. The window was blown out, and a flood of fire poured through it. Some of the explosive liquid stored in the basement had undoubtedly been set off.

"Has Chenevieux likewise cheated the law?" Nick muttered, under his breath.

CHAPTER IX.

WHAT OCCURRED IN THE BASEMENT.

Chick and Patsy took an earlier start from the hotel than Nick had suggested, and, making their way to the building on Cottage Grove Avenue, Chick started along the passageway between the drug store and the building to the south of it, in order to reach the basement window that Nick had pointed out during their visit to the place earlier in the day. The two detectives reached the window, and, to their consternation, found it boarded up on the inside.

"I'll bet this is the work of that druggist," muttered Chick. "Philip was smart enough to put him up to the job. There's only one way out of the difficulty, Patsy. I'll have to go through the drug store and let you in

through the window. I can readily remove the boards from the inside. Come around in front and let's reconnoiter."

Slipping around to the entrance, Chick peered through the window and saw that the store was empty of customers, and that the red-whiskered man alone was on duty.

"Good!" said Chick, retreating to a lighted hallway farther down the block.

Taking from his pocket a small notebook, he wrote a few words, tore out the leaf, and handed it to Patsy.

"The druggist never saw you, Patsy, and you can go in and get him to put up this fake prescription without exciting suspicion."

"What will you be doing in the meantime?"

"Fail to latch the front door as you go into the place and I'll show you."

"All right. Here goes."

Patsy went into the drug store and handed his slip of paper to the druggist.

The red-whiskered man looked the paper over with a critical eye.

"I'll wait for it," said Patsy.

"Very well," returned the other, as he disappeared behind a wooden partition in the back part of the store.

The druggist was barely out of sight when the front door silently opened and Chick glided noiselessly in. As silently as he could he crossed the store, laid one hand on the latch of the basement door, and raised the other as a signal for Patsy, who was suddenly taken with a violent fit of coughing. Under cover of this noise, Chick opened the door and closed it after him.

A few moments later, the druggist appeared with the prescription.

Patsy paid for it and hurried out, proceeding directly to the little passageway on the south side and to the basement window.

"Are you there, Chick?" he asked softly.

"All right, Patsy," came the low reply; "I'll have these boards off in a jiffy."

Chick was as good as his word, and Patsy was soon able to slide through the aperture and stand at his friend's side.

"Hold the flash light," said Chick, "while I put up the boards again."

It took but a moment to replace the boards, and the two detectives then made their way into the southwest room.

"We've got to secrete ourselves," went on Chick, "and these barrels are just what we need for the purpose. They do not require moving at all, as they stand opposite the door by which our man must enter. Down behind them, Patsy, and shut off the light."

Concealing themselves, they waited patiently in the darkness for the coming of Chenevieux.

After the lapse of a couple of hours, Patsy began to take a hopeless view of the case.

"Who knows but he caught on to our little game, after all?" he queried.

"Hist!" returned Chick. "There he comes, now. I hear some one descending the basement stairs. Get your revolver out, Patsy, and let me take that lantern."

The sound of some one stumbling through the darkness and cursing as he came along was borne to the ears of the waiting detectives. At last the man entered the room.

"Philippe," he whispered, "are you there?"

"Yes," whispered Chick; "is that you, Shen?"

"Yes, this is Chenevieux, *Diable!* Why don't you have a light?"

"I forgot to bring one with me," replied Chick. "You are ready to look for the treasure?"

"*Sapristo!* What else should I be here for? The sooner we can get a grip on that chest of diamonds and get out of the country, the better it will be for us. I feel as though we were going to strike a streak of bad luck."

"Bah!"

"What's the matter with you, Philippe? Have you got a cold?"

"Yes, a bad one. Do you notice how hoarse my voice is?"

"Yes. I've got a candle and a match in my hands. Wait till I strike a light."

Chick touched Patsy's arm and they rose to their feet, revolvers in hand.

Chenevieux struck a match against the wall and lighted his candle. As he looked around, Chick sent a shaft of light streaming through the darkness.

Upon seeing the revolvers pointed at him, Chenevieux started back and a startled oath dropped from his lips.

"Hands up, Chenevieux!" said Chick sternly. "If you try to escape, or to draw a gun, we'll riddle you with bullets."

"Who are you?"

"Detectives, and you know what you're wanted for. Up with your hands, I tell you!"

Chenevieux suddenly lifted his arms, and Chick jumped out and advanced toward him.

"This way, Patsy. Slip the come-alongs on his wrists, while I hold the drop on him."

Suddenly, quick as a flash of lightning, Chenevieux dropped his candle and sprang like a tiger at Chick's throat.

"If you want me," he hissed, "you'll have to take me."

Crack!

Chick's weapon spoke and a bullet plowed its way through the flesh of the murderer's arm. This, however, did not deter Chenevieux. He knew it was an all-day job with him, anyway, and he closed in upon the detective.

Patsy did not dare to fire, fearing he would hit Chick. The lighted candle, in falling to the floor, had not been extinguished, and it lay spluttering and flaring almost at the feet of the struggling men. The flash light had fallen from Chick's hand, and Patsy picked it up quickly and set it on a barrel, its light focused upon the detective and Chenevieux. This done, he sprang to Chick's assistance.

Chenevieux struggled like a demon, seeking, for some purpose or other, to get his hand in his pocket, but the trained muscles of Chick were plainly too much for him.

"Curse you!" hissed the murderer; "if I can't save myself, I can at least send us all up in smoke." Thereupon he threw himself forcibly against a huge bottle, packed in a wooden case, in such a manner that only the neck was visible. The bottle was overturned and broken. A terrible gaseous odor instantly spread itself through the room.

Chick saw the liquid rolling rapidly toward the blazing candle, and disentangling himself from Chenevieux, he

caught Patsy quickly about the waist and fell with him behind a barricade of barrels and casks. This he was barely able to do when there came a stunning explosion, and a stream of fire rolled through the broken window. The barrels behind which the detective had taken refuge were blown about in every direction. Chick was stunned and unconscious for some time, and when he came to himself, he found that he was lying in another room of the basement.

"Patsy!" he called.

There was no answer, and all Chick could hear was the heavy clang of fire-engine gongs as the steamers, hose carts, and hook-and-ladder wagons hastened to the scene.

Again Chick called for Patsy, as he struggled to his feet. Bewildered and almost suffocated though he was, the detective knew that his friend must be alive, for no one else besides Patsy could have pulled him out of the blazing room. But where was Chenevieux? Either he was killed by the explosion, or else Patsy was after him. In either case it would do Chick no good to remain where he was, so he hastened to the window and found that the boards had been knocked away.

"Ah," muttered the detective, "this is Patsy's work. He got out here."

Chick lost no time in making use of this avenue of escape. When he turned out of the narrow passageway, he found the drug store surrounded by a crowd of spectators, and firemen were drenching the basement.

Hurrying through the crowd, Chick looked anxiously for Patsy, but was finally compelled to give up his search. The boy was not to be found.

The blaze under the drug store was soon extinguished, and as one fire engine after another left the scene Chick returned to the basement, lighting matches to show the way. He was bent upon deciding the question as to whether or not Chenevieux had perished. But no remains were to be found, although he pushed aside the water-soaked, half-burned barrels and boxes and conducted a thorough search.

A few stones had been forced from the section of the wall nearest the explosion, and as Chick, in his investigation, arrived at this cavity, he started back in surprise. Directly in front of him stood a steel-bound chest! This was undoubtedly the chest used by Yet Klomb and represented by the circle in the southwest corner of the strange diagram.

"What are you doing here?"

Chick turned and found himself face to face with the druggist. The red-whiskered man carried a lantern, and Chick splashed his way toward him through the water that covered the basement floor, and caught the light out of his hands.

"I need this worse than you do," was his cool remark.

"Give me that light and get out of this basement, sir!" snarled the druggist.

"I guess not," replied Chick, as he sat down on a box and lifted his dripping feet out of the water.

"I'll have you arrested!"

"Just try it on if you want to get yourself into trouble."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you're in a mighty tight fix, and you don't know it."

"What are you talking about?"

"Who was that man you allowed to come down into this basement, a short time before the explosion?"

"He was a friend of Mr. Philip's."

"What did he want here?"

"He wanted to look over some things that formerly belonged to Chunder Sen and were stored here."

"He did, eh?" sneered Chick. "It happens that this iron chest contains diamonds belonging to the King of Siam, and you connived with this friend of Philip's to steal it."

"I didn't!" cried the druggist.

"Well, you call an officer here and see how quick I'll have you taken up. I'm going to guard this chest until some one shows up to relieve me of the duty. Get out of here, and don't bother me."

And the druggist got out, a mightily puzzled and bewildered man. He did not summon the police, but all night long he sat at the head of the basement stairs and listened to the movements made by the detective in the room below.

Day was just breaking in the east when Chick's solitary vigil was broken in upon by the sound of a familiar voice.

"What are you doing there, Chick?"

The detective looked up.

At the window he saw Nick and Patsy.

"Don't say a word to me, Nick," was the gloomy reply; "that Chenevieux escaped us."

"Yes, but he didn't escape me!"

"What do you mean?"

"Patsy and I have just come from the jail after landing our man behind the bars."

"Glory!" cried Chick, throwing up his hat.

CHAPTER X.

CLEVER WORK.

As Nick had paused in the center of the street he saw the dark form of a man emerge from the eastern side of the drug store and hurry toward Cottage Grove Avenue. Halting under a street lamp, on the corner, the man looked south, as though for a train. His face was turned toward Nick, and the detective got a good look at it. He was undoubtedly French, for he had the typical physiognomy of that nation—thin features, sharp chin, and dark mustache and imperial.

"Chenevieux!" muttered Nick instinctively. "If he escaped from that basement there is no doubt but that Chick and Patsy are safe!"

With this thought, Nick hurried toward the drug store, all the time keeping an eye on the figure on the corner.

No car being in sight, Chenevieux turned back and struck north, through an alley. Bounding down Cottage Grove Avenue at the top of his speed, Nick turned the corner and crouched out of sight at the other end of the alley, and he had not long to wait before Chenevieux made his appearance.

"Stop, or I fire!" cried Nick, springing up, revolver in hand.

A neighboring street lamp gave Chenevieux a good look into the resolute face of the detective, and he recoiled at the suddenly spoken words. A second time that night he had been surprised in a disagreeable manner.

"Put out your hands, Sheri!" commanded Nick, with a steely glitter in his eyes. "I arrest you for the murder of Chunder Sen."

The murderer thrust his uninjured hand into his pocket, and, when he withdrew it, the index finger was capped with a piece of shining metal secured by a leather band. Surmounting the metal was a minute projection.

"Shoot me, if you like," came the reckless answer. "Whether I am killed with a bullet or with this prussic thimble is a matter of no moment! Either is better than the electric chair!"

He raised his hand to his neck, but before he could make an abrasion of the skin, some one sprang upon him from behind and caught his arm. It was no less a person than Patsy.

"Ha!" cried Chenevieux, his eyes blazing with the ferocity of a tiger's, "you want to feel a scratch from my claws, too, do you?"

Pulling himself away from Patsy, the murderer, quick as a flash, reached forward to wound him with the fatal thimble. Quick as he was, however, he was not quick enough. Nick Carter leaped toward him and struck him a terrific blow with his fist. Chenevieux fell forward on his face, and, before he could recover, Nick had torn the prussic thimble from his finger.

"What's that contrivance?" asked Patsy.

Nick held up the thimble and eyed it with great curiosity.

"This deadly instrument," he replied, "was originated by the French, during the siege of Paris. It is filled with poison, and the merest scratch means death. It was this little toy that proved fatal to Chunder Sen, and to Bryns, the Swede. Look at that man's forefinger—see how it is stained by mere contact with the acid contained in that metal cap. This is one of the strangest and most effective appliances I have ever seen in the course of my professional career. Hello, our man is reviving, and he's wounded so he can't be handcuffed. I'll fix him."

Dropping the prussic thimble in his pocket, Nick handcuffed his left hand to the murderer's right and started off with him, bound for the jail.

On the way Patsy explained the cause of the explosion, and accounted for his sudden appearance behind Chenevieux by stating that he had dragged Chick to a place of safety, and had emerged from the basement just in time to see the murderer disappearing up the alley.

As soon as Chenevieux was safely jailed, Nick and Patsy returned to the drug store, where they were agreeably surprised to find Chick, standing guard over the iron box. Explanations were briefly given, and the chest was loaded into a wagon and taken to an express office, the detectives riding with it to make sure it reached the office of the transportation company in safety.

It was not a large chest, but it was very heavy and of curious construction. The lid was secured with no less than three locks. Whether Yet Klomb, otherwise Chunder Sen, had tampered with the contents, or not, was a question to be settled only when the receptacle reached New York and was examined by the King of Siam's agent, who had intrusted Nick with the work of recovering the treasure.

At the express office the chest was bound with ropes and the knots sealed. The detective then tagged it with his New York address, paid the exorbitant fee exacted by the company for transporting the treasure, and went away with his two assistants.

"Now what?" asked Chick.

"There's nothing more for you and Patsy, Chick, and you can go to the hotel and take it easy. I have a little more work to do, in connection with the Siamese puzzle we have just solved, then I'll join you, and we'll catch the first train for New York."

Thereupon the detectives separated, Chick and Patsy going one way and Nick another. A telegraph office was conveniently at hand, and Nick stepped in and sent a message to the King of Siam's representative, asking him to call at Nick's New York house at six in the afternoon of the following day. After that he returned to the Cottage Grove Avenue building, ascended the stairs at the rear of the drug store, and halted at the door leading to the rooms formerly occupied by Prince Yet Klomb. From Patsy's description he was able to pick out the right door, and his picklock quickly admitted him. There were two rooms in the suite, sitting room and bedchamber. They were meagerly furnished, and there was little about the appointments to suggest the character of the man who had occupied them. A *nargileh*, or water pipe, for smoking, stood on a hassock at one side of the sitting apartment, and on a center table stood a tobacco jar. The jar was peculiar, being formed of a section of elephant tusk set into an ebony standard.

Nick lifted the top and looked in. The jar was half full of Turkish tobacco. Replacing the ivory cover on the jar, Nick passed into the rear room. There was little there to claim his attention. A skullcap of red silk, with a tassel, hung from a nail in the closet, alongside of a smoking jacket. On the floor was a pair of Oriental slippers with pointed and turned-up toes. This was all the wearing apparel to be seen.

The detective felt in the pocket of the jacket, but found nothing. A cheap American satchel set on a chair near the bed and Nick looked into it, finding it empty, and seeing that there was nothing to be learned from a search of the two rooms, he started to leave. As he reached the hall door, it struck him that he would take the tobacco jar along, and, returning to the table, he opened the jar and began turning out its contents on the table top. To his surprise, something heavy dropped out with the tobacco, and thrusting his fingers into the brown heap, he brought out a key ring with three small, peculiarly shaped keys. The ring was of steel, but the keys were of gold.

"Ah!" he murmured. "I didn't think of finding them hidden in a tobacco jar!"

Slipping the keys into his pocket he wrapped the jar in an old newspaper, took it under his arm, and left. He had come to the rooms hoping to find the keys, consequently he was very well satisfied with the time spent.

His next call was at police headquarters, where he received the congratulations of the chief and told of his work in detail. From police headquarters the detective returned to the hotel, and that afternoon he and his assistants left Chicago on a fast train for New York.

Chenevieux was tried and found guilty. There was no such person as Hip Lung, it afterward developed. This character was assumed by Philip for the express purpose of carrying on his nefarious work with his brother.

A search through the "laundry" failed to disclose any trace of the Swede's body, although Philip admitted in his confession that the man had been murdered by Shen. The remains had no doubt been done away with in some manner by Shen himself, although the murderer would say not a word in regard to this phase of the question.

Promptly at the hour set, the representative of the King

of Siam put in his appearance at Nick's house. The sight of the chest filled him with delight, and, when the sealed ropes were cut and the box opened by means of the three golden keys, the representative was still further delighted by the flashing gems which met his eyes. The contents were checked carefully, not a single diamond was found to be missing, and when the agent went away he took the chest with him and left in Nick's hands the fee his royal master had told him to leave in case the celebrated detective succeeded in recovering the treasure. It was princely in its amount. Yet Klomb was buried in the potter's field, thus finding ignominious burial far from his native country, a victim of his own misdoing.

CHAPTER XI.

AN OLD CHESTNUT IN A NEW BUR.

It was a couple of days after Nick's return to New York from Chicago, that he was seated in his study reading an evening paper. The article which the detective was reading, and which seemed to interest him, told that shortly after ten o'clock that morning, Eugene Clark, a messenger for the Union National Bank had left the bank, carrying a satchel containing $35,000. He was on his way to the firm of Hyde & Schumann. While crossing Broadway at Duane Street, Clark had been knocked down and rendered unconscious by a white horse driven by a young woman. The young woman did everything in her power to make Clark more comfortable, and went with Policeman Nolan when Clark was carried into a drug store. Here he was attended by a young man with a valise, who said he was a doctor. This doctor said Clark did not seem to be much hurt. As the young woman complained of her ankle being injured when she ran to Clark's help, the doctor took her into a back room of the store to examine it. He found the ankle was only bruised, and he left the store, turning both cases over to the ambulance surgeon, who had been summoned. When Clark regained his senses he insisted that the young woman should be locked up on a charge of reckless driving. When Clark asked for his satchel, a dark young man, who Policeman Nolan said was responsible, produced it. Just then, Mr. Andrews, assistant cashier of the bank, entered the drug store. Clark gave Mr. Andrews the key to his satchel when requested to do so, and when Mr. Andrews opened the satchel he found the money was gone.

Nick had just finished reading the article, when Joseph announced that there were four men in the library who wished to see the detective. Nick told Joseph to usher the men into the study. The men proved to be Mr. Hallett, cashier of the Union National Bank; Mr. Andrews, the assistant cashier; Mr. Lennon, and Policeman Nolan.

Lennon was known to Nick as a headquarters detective, and as an intelligent, well-trained, and thoroughly honest officer. The detective also had some slight acquaintance with Hallett.

The last named briefly stated the case which Nick had just finished reading about in the paper. He added, however, one important fact.

"Mr. Lennon," he said, "had been engaged by us to watch Clark. The circumstances were of the ordinary kind.

"Clark had been with us five years, and we had the strongest confidence in him. He had given satisfaction in every way, and his character, so far as we could learn, was absolutely irreproachable. I was surprised, therefore, to receive a report about a month ago to the effect that he was conducting himself in an improper manner. We heard that Clark had begun to be seen at music halls, in company with a woman, apparently not of the best character, and that he was spending more money than his salary permitted him to afford. This report was made to me directly, and I was very sorry to hear it. I was unwilling to discharge him on the evidence at hand, which was not of the best. Therefore, feeling, as I have said, a general interest in him, I secured the services of Mr. Lennon for a strictly private investigation."

Mr. Hallett at this point motioned to Lennon to continue the narration.

"I took the case last Thursday," said the officer. "I verified the reports about Clark, by witnesses, but didn't see anything myself. The man was spending his evenings at his boarding house, and, in general, there was nothing to report. At first I didn't shadow him during the day, because Mr. Hallett didn't think it was necessary. But last evening I got word from Mr. Hallett to come to the bank in the morning. He told me that Clark had developed another queer streak. He took more time than was necessary in his errands. He would go to a bank or a business house, and occupy half an hour more than the time required.

"I agreed with Mr. Hallett that this was worth looking into. When Clark left the bank this morning, I shadowed him. Of course, there was little reason to suspect that he would try to get away with the money on that very morning, but it's my notion that one can't be too careful in affairs of this kind. So I took occasion to be in sight when the money was put into the satchel by Mr. Andrews. It went in all right, and the satchel was locked; and from that moment to the time when it was opened and found to be empty it wasn't out of my sight.

"I followed Clark to Broadway, and when he started to cross, I did so, too, about twenty yards below him. That was how I happened to be blocked off for a few seconds just as he was run over. That was the only moment when my eye wasn't on him; but the trick couldn't have been done then."

"It must have been," said Andrews.

"That isn't reasonable," retorted Lennon. "In fact, if you'll pardon me, it's nonsense. No man alive could unlock that satchel and lock it again in that time. I saw him just as the horse hit him. An instant later, there he was, lying on the ground, with the satchel under the back of his neck, and his arms flung across his body, totally unconscious. Then I dodged around a wagon or two, and inside of three seconds I stood by his side. He was substantially in the same position, only the woman was supporting his head. When she got up, I grabbed the satchel, and I stuck right to it, from that time on till I gave it to you, Mr. Andrews, in that store."

"Do you mean to intimate," asked Nick, of Andrews, "that Clark let himself be run over in order to give himself an opportunity of unlocking that satchel? Why should he take such a desperate chance as that?"

"It's incredible!" exclaimed Hallett. "Why, the horse might have stepped on his head and killed him. There's no motive for such a game. For my part, I've no doubt at all that it was an accident, and——"

"Of course it was," said Andrews. "What I mean is, that while he was rolling over in the street, it flashed upon

him that there was his chance, and he took it. He wasn't really hurt any."

"I'd like to call your attention to a few points," said Lennon sarcastically. "In the first place, what became of the money?"

"If I knew that," Andrews said, "we should not be here."

"What was done in the store?" asked Nick, of Lennon.

"We locked the doors," he replied. "Then I searched Clark. Of course, he didn't have the money. After that, every man in the place offered to permit himself to be searched, and it was done."

"On the theory that Clark might have passed the money, I suppose?" said Nick.

"Yes; but he couldn't have done it. I simply know that he didn't. And I'll remark—not for your benefit, Mr. Carter, of course—that passing a roll of bills pretty nearly as big as a man's head isn't an easy thing to do."

"How about the woman?" asked Nick.

"I took her to police headquarters and the matron searched her. Nothing was found."

"Who is she?"

"She calls herself Hattie Delmar. She lives in a flat on West Forty-fourth Street. Her record is not good. She's been a concert-hall singer, but hasn't sung in some time. She claims to have inherited some money, and I guess she has lived by her wits for the last few years.

"Of course, this looks bad; but it doesn't prove anything. There's the problem still: How could she have got that money? Remember, this was all done in Broadway in open daylight. Do you believe, Mr. Carter, that she could have opened that satchel in the midst of that crowd, and taken out the money, and locked it up again, and gotten rid of the wad of bills, all without a sign of suspicion on the part of anybody?"

"Frankly," said Nick, "I don't. It simply isn't possible on the facts as you present them. Now let me have a look at the satchel. You have brought it, I see."

Nick took it in his hands and then he began to laugh.

"Is your name Hiram Hubbardsquash?" he asked Lennon.

The officer reddened.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"Don't be angry," laughed Nick; "but, really, I didn't know but you'd just come in from Wayback to buy some green goods."

"You don't tell me——"

"Yes, I do. It's the same old game—the chestnut in a new bur. The satchels have been changed."

CHAPTER XII.

AN OLD WHITE HORSE.

"How can you possibly know that?" demanded Hallett. "Why, you never have seen the—er—the other one!"

"True," replied Nick, "but I know the points of the game. Tell me this: Suppose that it had been somebody's object to take that satchel containing thirty-five thousand dollars and substitute another, what would he have done?"

"Got one just like it, of course."

"To be more exact, he'd have got one as nearly like it as possible, and then he would have increased the resemblance. Well, that's what has been done to this bag. It has been artificially stained and scratched, evidently in the process of copying another."

The detective pointed out the marks which his trained eye had seen.

"Moreover," he continued, "there's a special point in this game. Ordinarily, a package of sawdust takes the place of the green goods. In this case it wouldn't do. It was necessary that the bag should be found empty, otherwise a change would have been suspected. So the thief had to take some other means to make an empty bag feel like one containing thirty-five thousand dollars. In short, I discover that this one has been deliberately weighted. It's a fine point. The human hand when it expects a weight, notices the absence of it. But when the bag had been seen to be empty, the extra weight—really a small matter—was not thought of. Now the question is, who changed the bags. Mr. Andrews——"

"Eh!" exclaimed the assistant cashier, jumping out of his chair.

"I was about to ask you," said Nick, "whether there were extra satchels belonging to the bank which might have been used by Clark for this purpose."

"None that I know of," rejoined Andrews. "Upon my word, you startled me, you spoke my name so loudly."

"I noticed that you were absorbed in your own thoughts, and I wanted to attract your attention," said the detective. "And now, gentlemen, let us consider the case in the light of this new development. It strikes me that there is one character in it who has been strangely overlooked. I allude, of course, to the physician who examined Clark. He seems to have been the only person who got out of the store before the loss of the money was discovered. He had a private interview with Miss Delmar, and, altogether, his advantages seem to have been rather better than any other person's. He should be found."

"We're after him," said Lennon. "I'm not so dull as I seem, Mr. Carter. I thought of him long ago. Two men from headquarters are after him. But there isn't anything but description to go on."

"I'll put Patsy after him, I guess," said Nick. "That's about all that can be done to-night. I'll see all of you, I suppose, in court to-morrow, when the woman is arraigned. She's under arrest, of course?"

"Yes," said Hallett, "she's held on the charge of reckless driving. It was thought best not to declare the more serious charge."

That closed the conference. The next morning Hallett, Lennon, and the policeman were in court. So was Clark. He did not appear to be much the worse for his perilous adventure.

Clark had had an interview with the prisoner; and when she was arraigned he asked permission to testify. He himself had been under arrest, but had been bailed by Hallett, who still believed in his innocence. The demeanor of the messenger had changed very much since his recovery of consciousness in the store at Duane Street and Broadway. He no longer showed any resentment against the woman. Instead, he testified with great good nature that the accident was entirely due to his own carelessness.

There was nothing to do but discharge the prisoner who had spent the night in a cell, and was not in a very good temper. By Nick's advice, she was not rearrested; but when she left the courtroom, the detective discreetly followed her.

Clark's eagerness to free the woman had produced a reaction in the detective's mind. Nick had evolved a theory of the case which admitted of the messenger's innocence;

but he had seen in court evidences of an understanding between Clark and Miss Delmar, and it looked very suspicious. Nick had also learned that Miss Delmar answered closely to the description of the woman with whom Clark had been seen in the concert halls, by Hallet's original informant. But she was not well known in New York, and her identity with the messenger's temptress had not been established.

The obscure point in the case was the method taken to secure an exchange of the satchels. If the woman and Clark were in it, the trick must have been done immediately after the "accident" on Broadway, and while Clark was lying on the ground. Of course that meant that the messenger and the woman had timed their arrival at the spot, and that Clark had deliberately permitted himself to be run over. This theory fitted ill with Nick's experience. Thieves of Clark's class—supposing him to be one—are very careful of their precious skins. They shrink from incurring the risk of personal injury. Few of them possess the nerve to fall under a horse's iron-shod hoofs, and run the chance of being kicked in the face or otherwise severely hurt. Certainly, from his brief study of Clark, Nick would not have believed him to be the man to do it.

So the horse cut a considerable figure in the case, and Nick was not sorry to have a chance to see him. In fact, he had the opportunity immediately, for Miss Delmar led him to the stable where the animal was kept. She took a look at the horse, and then went out into the office, announcing her intention of waiting a few minutes till the owner of the stable returned.

This gave Nick a chance to make a little closer inspection of the animal. The detective knows beasts almost as well as he knows men, and it did not take him two minutes to assure himself that the big white horse had had a professional career. In short, he was an old trick horse from a circus.

"Trained to prance around over a man's body, and not step on him," muttered the detective. "I'll bet a hat on it."

He was about to have the horse led out, for the purpose of verifying his guess, when the stable keeper returned. Nick dared not leave Miss Delmar to her own devices any longer.

The woman's interview with the stable keeper was brief. She sold him the horse for a song. From the stable she went straight to her flat in Forty-fourth Street. As soon as it became evident where she was going, the detective got ahead of her, and effected an entrance into the house. In the hall he met Patsy, disguised as a janitor's assistant. He was mending the carpet in the hall, before Miss Delmar's door.

"He's in there," whispered Patsy. "I got track of him in a downtown hotel, where he spent the night. Something has evidently gone wrong with him. I've heard him inside there raising a rumpus and swearing to himself. In my opinion——"

Patsy broke off suddenly, and bent over his work. Nick hastily slipped away, and concealed himself on the next flight of stairs, for the man was coming out. He descended the stairs. Nick did not follow, knowing that the man would meet Miss Delmar and return. Instead, therefore, of trailing, the detective played a waiting game. He picked the lock of the flat, and concealed himself in a room adjoining the parlor.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ASTONISHING COINCIDENCE.

Half a minute later, the man and woman entered. Neither of them was in a pleasant frame of mind.

"You're a fool to come here" exclaimed the woman, but in a guarded tone. "We'll all be nabbed, sure. Why didn't you give me a show to get out of town, if I could?"

"I was afraid you might forget to communicate with me," said the man, in a voice full of suppressed rage. "In short, I thought you'd give me the slip. You're too clever for me, Harriet. What did you do with that money?"

The last words fairly burst out of him. There was not only wrath, but uncontrollable astonishment, in them.

"What are you giving us, Eddie?" gasped she.

"Oh, don't try that. You've thrown us all down. You've got the cash, and you'd have skipped with it, and left Clark and me in the lurch if I hadn't come here."

"Are you crazy? Or what is this game? It's too deep for me."

"Is it?" he sneered. "I didn't suppose that anything was too deep for you. Hattie, how did you get that stuff out of that bag, and get away with it? It beats me to death."

Nick got a chance to peep into the room. He saw the woman walk up to the man and seize him by the wrist while she stared into his face.

"You're telling me the truth!" she said, at last. "You couldn't lie to me, Eddie, I know you too well. The satchel was empty. Clark has thrown us both down."

It was the man's turn to stare.

"You made the shift, as agreed!" he hissed.

"Sure. Everything went straight. The horse behaved beautifully. I timed it just right, and I thought that Clark had done the trick perfectly. He fell with his head on the satchel just right. When I got down to lift him, I slipped my skirt over the plunder, and in a second I had detached the bogus bag from the hooks under my skirt, and had fastened the right one on there."

She spoke as if to herself—as one who speaks that he may more clearly remember.

"I did it all with one hand under my skirt," she continued. "It took less than two seconds while I was lifting him. I slipped the rings of the strap on the bogus bag while I pretending to get up, and right under the policeman's eyes, but he didn't see me."

"And when you gave me the satchel in that office," said the man, in a similar tone, "I slipped it into my bag and got out."

"And nobody had a chance to go through it?"

"I should say not. I went right to the hotel, and looked, and the satchel was empty!"

"Then it's clear that Clark did us! But, why? why?"

"I give it up. It's incredible. He dare not play us false."

"And we worked it so neatly," groaned the woman. "It was much better than the way he had planned it—to have me limp in somewhere and you attend me. It looked far more natural, as it was, and you did it slick. And to think that we're done this way!"

She was silent a moment. Then she said:

"No, Eddie; it isn't possible. Clark couldn't have done it. That detective was right on his heels, and he's dead straight. There's no game between them.

"Clark had no chance to get the stuff. It's you! you!

You are lying to me, Ed Harlan, and trying to cheat me of my share!"

There was a hurried rustling of her skirts. Nick looked again, and saw her run to a table and take a small revolver from a drawer. It was high time to interfere. The woman, certain that her pal was playing her false, would be likely to avenge herself.

Nick stepped into the room with a revolver in his hand.

"The game's up, Eddie Harlan," he said. "You'd better surrender. And you, madame, will oblige me by putting that revolver back."

It fell to the floor. The two conspirators saw that they were caught.

"And now," said Nick, "I've got the details of your little game, and it only remains to turn over the money to me."

"I'll take my oath a thousand times," yelled Harlan, "that that money——"

He was interrupted by a loud knock on the door. It was Patsy, who stood there with a message from Chick, who had been working upon Nick's original theory, at the bank.

"All O. K.," ran the message. "Andrews has confessed. I have the money. The change was made just as you supposed, in the moment before Clark took the satchel. I caught Andrews in his lie that there was no similar one in the bank. I proved that there was one; that he had known it, and that he also knew of the suspicion against Clark, but not of the fact that a detective was to follow him that day. The spare satchel was missing from the bank. That settled it in my mind, and I confronted Andrews in spite of the weakness of my case, because I'd studied the man. He gave up almost too easily."

Nick's face was a study as he looked up from this note.

"My friends," he said, "you are victims of that painful advantage which makes life so hard for the bank thief who works from the outside. The fellow on the inside gets the first call on the cash."

These are the exact facts about one of the strangest coincidences in Nick's experience.

That two robberies, depending on the old green-goods game of changing bags, should have been planned, and actually executed independently in this strangely conflicting fashion, is almost beyond belief, but it is a matter of record at police headquarters, as well as in the private annals of the greatest of detectives.

It appeared later that the woman had originally exerted her charms on Clark because she knew his occupation, and had an indefinite idea of robbing the bank through him.

Then her lover, Harlan, a former ringmaster in a circus, and one of the craziest crooks that ever figured on police blotters, evolved the remainder of the scheme, procured the horse, and played his part, as has been here set down.

All four of the criminals were sent to prison.

THE END.

"The Man Outside; or, Nick Carter's Artifice," which will be found in the next issue of this weekly, No. 37, out May 24th, shows the great detective at his best. This is a strong story, and you, who are fond of good detective stories, should not miss it. In the opening chapter Nick gives an interesting and ingenious exhibition of the fine art of deduction that makes the detectives at police headquarters sit up and take notice. He then proceeds to clear up a crime and the mystery surrounding a crime. He also clears a friend from implication in a crime.

UNDER THE KNIFE;

Or, THE CLOAK OF GUILT.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RESULT OF MORLEY'S DISCOVERY.

During the interval while Yardley stood silently watching the movements of his confederate, Keene had time for a quick review of the case, and some of the features that had mystified him. It was plain there was no collusion between these men and Doctor Kendall. The latter was an entire stranger to them. Up to the very hour of Stella Russell's death, their infamous game evidently had been that of coercing a helpless girl and swindling a shallow-minded old woman, already on the brink of the grave. It was of this game that Keene had heard them talking in the smoking room.

Now several new questions had risen in his mind.

When and how had Yardley discovered the guilt of the Boston physician?

Why had Kendall so cautiously planned his visit to the hotel, and ended an interview, for which Stella Russell had been anxious, by taking her life?

Was it a case of suicide by a distressed and harassed girl?

If so, why had Doctor Kendall fled like a criminal and a coward?

These were the questions flashing through Keene's mind when he saw Jimmy Morley returning, and again heard Yardley addressing him.

"Now, Doctor Kendall, we have looked you up, and find you a man of high standing, and a man of wealth."

"Well, suppose I am, Doctor Yardley. What then?"

"Do you mean to accept our terms? Or will you suffer us to expose you?"

"In a word, sir, you wish me to buy your silence?"

"That hits the nail on the head," said Yardley decisively. "You have spoiled our game, doctor, but we don't propose to quit losers."

Jimmy Morley moved his toe about among the shavings until it struck against a piece of joist.

"What price do you expect me to pay?" demanded Keene.

"Considering all things, we will let you down easy."

"What do you call easy?"

"Say twenty thousand dollars, paid down in cash."

"I'll not consider it!"

Morley worked his toe under the stick of joist and raised it till he could grasp the end with his hand.

"You'll do better," Yardley answered sternly. "You'll do better than consider it. You'll pay it!"

"This is a case of blackmail!" cried Keene, with a feigned mingling of desperation and anger.

"Call it what you like."

"How do I know you possess the evidence of my guilt?" persisted Keene. "Tell me its nature? Tell of what it consists? If you can show me in just what way I am in your power——"

"In this way!" suddenly cried Morley, from behind him.

The ruffian's words were accompanied with an oath, and with a blow that was dealt to kill.

It would have effected the miscreant's object, and have laid the detective out forever, but for one slight circumstance: Yardley, who was standing directly in front of Keene, saw the heavy weapon descend, and involuntarily recoiled.

Keene's quick eye observed this movement. To him it was like a warning. The detective instantly ducked, throwing up his arm to shield his head; but the blow glanced sidewise from head and shoulder, and laid him senseless on the floor of the gloomy shop.

Yardley sprang forward, with a cry of dismay.

"Good God! What have you done, Jimmy? You've killed the man!"

"I hope so," returned Morley, throwing down the piece of joist.

"What do you mean?"

"Pull off his disguise and you'll see what I mean. The man is not Doctor Kendall."

"What?"

"It's Sheridan Keene!"

Yardley sprang to the side of the prostrate detective and tore away his disguise.

The pale face of the stricken officer stared up at him through the gloom like the hueless face of a corpse.

"You're right, Jimmy!" Yardley gasped amazedly.

"I knew I was right. The guy that went by outside was Kendall."

"The devil you say!"

"You see my lamps are worth something, after all."

"This beats me."

"It don't beat me!" cried Jimmy Morley, now kicking the shavings into a pile on the floor.

"But how could he have learned that we were going to meet Kendall?"

"You're a fool," cried Morley, "with all your oily gammon! We have had no talk with Kendall."

"What do you mean?"

"There lies the man who was on the end of your wire."

"Then he must suspect——"

"Kendall, of course!" cried Morley. "He must have been in his office and answered your call."

"It certainly appears so now."

"He has piped the whole business."

"What are you doing?"

"What do you think I am doing, making up my bed?" demanded Morley, with a vicious display of determination. "This beak is in our way, and must be removed."

Yardley hesitated.

There could be no doubt as to what the movements of his more desperate confederate meant. Already Morley had gathered a great pile of shavings on the floor and under the wooden bench.

"Do you think it's necessary, Jimmy?" ventured Yardley.

The young ruffian swung round, with an oath.

"Haven't you got any brains?" he demanded. "D'ye think the beak has twigged Kendall after the talk we have made?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Then what can we do with Kendall, if this fellow lives?"

"Not a thing."

"But if we do him, the game is in our hands."

"That's true."

"We alone will be wise about Kendall, and can force him to the wall. D'ye think——"

"I think you're right," interrupted Yardley. "Make haste with the job."

"Get the door key out of his pocket."

"I have it."

"Is he in space?"

"For a long time yet, Jimmy, after the blow you gave him."

"Five minutes will serve us and do him! Look lively, now, and open the side windows. The crib will burn like tinder."

Yardley threw open both windows on either side, and a draft of wintry air swept through the gloomy building.

For a moment Morley bent over the motionless figure on the floor, then raised one arm and dropped it.

It fell like an arm of lead.

Then the knave started up, poured the oil from his lantern over the shavings, tossed the wick into the pile, and touched a match to it. On the instant the inflammable stuff he had collected was in a blaze.

"The door, Yardley!" cried Morley hoarsely. "Make sure it's locked!"

This was quickly accomplished after their egress, and a minute later both men had reached the extremity of Ackron Court, and vanished round the corner.

Already the flames were flooding the street with red light and were stealing up the walls inside.

Sheridan Keene still lay senseless on the floor.

The flight of the two miscreants had been precipitous, and they now were well away—so far, in fact, that they did not hear the cry then sounding on the night air:

"Fire! fire! fire!"

A new figure had appeared on the scene.

It was that of a man climbing in through one of the side windows, where the way was yet clear, and who saw at a glance that the building could not be saved with the means at command.

Yet this man was the owner of the building, one Mr. Carleton. Prompted by curiosity, after having loaned Keene the key, he had ventured approaching the shop in the hope of discovering what was in the wind.

He had seen three men enter the building, and only two emerge, running away at full speed. The occasion was very quickly apparent, and the magnitude of the crime was at once suspected.

While shouting the alarm, Carleton hurriedly climbed through the side window. The figure of Keene was plainly discernible on the floor in the glare of the approaching flames.

Carleton raised him in his arms and bore him to the window, where, for the first time since being struck down, Sheridan Keene showed signs of returning consciousness, and opened his eyes.

"Thank Heaven they have not killed you!" Carleton cried, lifting him bodily out of the window to the ground outside.

The sweep of cold air on Keene's face acted like a stimulant. He steadied himself by the window frame, looking vaguely at the speaker for a moment, and then suddenly grasped the full significance of his words, and of what had occurred.

"Killed me!" he faintly echoed, pulling himself together on hearing his own voice. "Not by a long chalk! I am worth a dozen dead men yet!"

Nevertheless, the newspapers of the following morning contained startling stories of the complete destruction of Carleton's shop by fire the previous night, and of the discovery of a charred body in the ruins. The calamity was attributed to the carelessness of some vagabond, who presumably had entered the place for shelter, and whose pipe had set fire to the shavings of which he had made a bed.

The issue of these reports, however, was but another move on the part of Sheridan Keene.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BOOT ON THE OTHER LEG.

The following morning dawned clear and cold.

Sheridan Keene had figured to a nicety what would follow, when Yardley and his confederate believed that he was dead, and that they were not suspected of having fired Carleton's shop.

By Yardley's own words, it had been only his fear of the detective that had restrained him from boldly visiting Doctor Kendall at his house; and now, with the belief that Keene was dead, the immediate conduct of the scoundrels could easily be anticipated.

Keene knew, further, that they would feel that Boston was becoming uncomfortably warm for them; and that they would lose no time in attempting to coerce the local physician, and then effect their departure from the country.

In anticipation of this, Keene was alert that morning, and in a new disguise was engaged in shadowing the hotel.

That he had reasoned well, became apparent about nine o'clock, when he saw both Yardley and Jimmy Morley leave the house, and depart in the direction of Doctor Kendall's residence.

They were nicely dressed, and by their faces were well satisfied with the turn affairs had taken.

"I will speedily change that look for them!" was Keene's mental exclamation when he saw them depart. "Now to discover how Kendall will receive them, and what he will say! I must head them off, and get into his house before them."

They were walking leisurely, apparently discussing their design, and he felt absolutely sure of their destination.

Hastening through one of the side streets, which materially reduced the distance, Keene entered the shop of a gas fitter and borrowed a blouse and cap, displaying his badge and explaining his project.

Two minutes later, with a foot of iron pipe and a wrench in his hand, he hurried into the alley back of Kendall's residence, and applied for admission at the basement door.

"I am the city gas fitter," he explained to the servant who responded to his knock on the door. "I wish to examine your gas meter."

"It's out front, sir, in the coal cellar," the girl replied, offering no objection.

"I know where it is, thanks."

The servant returned to the kitchen.

The detective slipped through the entry and stole up to the front hall.

Two women were talking in the doctor's reception room.

"He will not receive them in there," Keene instantly decided.

The reception room joined the front parlor, with only a portière between, and the detective also excluded the latter room as improbable. Crouching under the front stairs, he observed that a servant was sweeping the dining room. Only one other room remained on that floor, and the door of it was closed.

Keene took the chance of being observed, and stole across the hall to peer through the keyhole.

"The doctor's operating room," he muttered. "It appears to be vacant."

He took a second chance, and softly opened the door. It was a large, square room, with a single window. A long operating table was in the middle of the floor. Fixed upon two of the side walls were cabinets, with shelves containing splints, trusses, and various surgical appliances.

"It's a hundred to one he will bring them out here," Keene decided.

He looked for a closet in which to conceal himself, but could find none.

In one corner of the room, however, stood a tall, closed box, which he hastened to open.

It contained a skeleton, hanging from a hook at the top of the box.

"The very place," muttered Keene triumphantly. "I'll have to ask you to vacate these lodgings, my emaciated friend! The place for you is a dime museum."

Hastily opening one of the several large drawers under the cabinet shelves, he unhooked the skeleton, and, with more reverence than ceremony, he dumped the rattling bones into the drawer and closed it.

Then he stepped within the tall box, which easily admitted his figure, and held the door ajar.

"As snug as a bug in a rug!" he said to himself, with much satisfaction. "I couldn't have invented a better concealment had I lain awake nights to plan it. Now, if the doctor will only bring the two knaves out here for their little interview, I think——"

But he then stopped thinking in that line, for he heard the sound of the doorbell and the tread of the physician himself on the floor above.

He waited patiently.

At the end of three minutes his genius was rewarded.

Doctor Kendall opened the door of the operating room and entered.

Behind him came Doctor Yardley and Jimmy Morley, well primed for their intimidating design.

Keene held the door of the box so that he could peer out through a mere crack, while every word that was spoken easily reached his ears.

"Excuse my bringing you out here, gentlemen," said Kendall. "My wife has early callers, and has occupied my office."

"That's all right, doctor," said Yardley, rather grimly. "It's all the better if we are where we will not be overheard."

Doctor Kendall was quite pale, but he gravely waved the two men to chairs.

"What am I to infer from that observation?" he asked curtly. "I recognize you as a man I saw upon the scene of that unfortunate tragedy night before last, but I have yet to learn your business with me."

"By gracious!" thought Keene; "this man don't act much like a criminal, nor one to be easily intimidated. If he is really guilty of this crime, his nerve is unparalleled."

"Oh, I will explain our business quickly enough!" exclaimed Yardley, with scurrilous significance.

"Do so at once, then," said Doctor Kendall, standing motionless on the floor. "It's time I started out on my round of visits."

"You are a cool one, to say the least," grinned Yardley.

"I realize no occasion for excitement," was the haughty reply. "State your business at once, or I must leave you."

"Well, Doctor Kendall," and Yardley began to show temper, "we happen to know all about that little affair on Thursday night, in which you was involved."

"Is that so?"

"Yes, it's so!"

"Well, what of it?"

"Look here, Doctor Kendall, you had better come off your high horse with me," Yardley sternly cried. "We're not here for amusement, or to be given a bluff."

"You rather have come to give one, I should say," retorted Kendall curtly. "But, sir, allow me to add, that you have not selected a very easy mark."

"We'll see about that," returned Yardley, with a threatening nod. "We know, and can prove, that you were the party who dined with Stella Russell on Thursday night, and who is responsible for her death. Are you aware, Doctor Kendall, that the detectives of Boston are now searching for her murderer?"

"Oh, yes, I am well aware of it."

"And that a word from me will utterly expose you, sir?"

"I hear you say so."

"Isn't it a fact?"

"I am willing to take your word for it," said Doctor Kendall, drawing up his fine figure and giving his hand a deprecatory wave.

"And in the face of this, and what has occurred, do you mean that you defy me?" angrily demanded Yardley, quite nonplused by the physician's haughty indifference.

"No, I do not defy you," was the answer. "I merely care nothing about you."

"Don't you know that exposure will ruin you, convict you of the crime, and send you to prison, if not to the scaffold?" demanded Yardley, with vicious impatience.

"I hear what you say, and now know at what you are driving," said Doctor Kendall sternly. "You have come here to intimidate me, if possible, and to extort money from me. Am I right?"

"That is the situation, precisely!"

"Then here is my answer," said the physician, with a magnificent display of mingled dignity and contempt. "There is the door. Go at once to the police headquarters and make your disclosure. I will not stand in your way. After you have told your story, I will tell mine, and face the music."

"Your story!" sneered Yardley.

"Yes, my story!" cried the physician. "Not that Stella Russell was murdered, a fact which, I think, you know as well as I; but that her death was the result of a most lamentable accident."

Yardley sprang angrily to his feet.

"Suppose it was! Admit that it was!" he cried viciously. "You can't prove that it was! Your every act has been that of a man who killed her. I happen to have the evidence by which you possibly might sustain a claim that her death was accidental; but you can secure that evidence, Doctor Kendall, only by paying me my price. I'll gamble you'll come to my terms before I am through with you!"

Kendall still stood motionless on the floor, his dark eyes frowning on the disappointed face of the angry scoundrel.

"You, then, are the person who examined Miss Russell's body before I arrived there," he said curtly. "It must have been at that time that you discovered and secured the evidence of which you speak."

"That's it, precisely!" cried Yardley. "And the moment you laid your hands upon her, I knew you were the party that she had dined with. You at once felt of her throat in search for——"

"One moment, sir," interrupted Kendall. "I now realize that I cannot easily prove just how Stella Russell met her death, since you have been knave enough to remove the one bit of evidence by which I might have done so. You now ask me to buy this evidence at your price. Do you happen to have it with you this morning?"

"Yes, sir, I have," Yardley impulsively answered, thinking the doctor about to yield. "I brought it——"

"That's enough!" Kendall forcibly interrupted, striding to the door and placing his back against it.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that you'll give it to me before you leave this room!" cried the physician, with terrible sternness. "I mean that both of you are scoundrels and blacklegs, with whom I will have no dealings! You shall be arrested for blackmail within the hour! Now that I am threatened thus, I will tell the truth like a man. You shall produce this evidence in the presence of officers——"

"Oh, no I'll not!" Yardley viciously interrupted. "I'll do nothing of the kind. I'll keep my hold on you, for all the bluff that you are making. The evidence——"

"Produce that evidence, Yardley, and let me see what it's like!"

The last came in a ringing voice from Sheridan Keene. He came out of his concealment with his revolver in his hand, and, striding straight to the knavish English physician, thundered sternly:

"Produce it, I say! And consider yourself under arrest!"

"Good God!" gasped Yardley, white as death itself. "You—alive?"

"Yes, alive, no thanks to you or yonder ruffian!" cried Keene. "Sit down, Morley, or I'll drop you in a surer way than you dropped me. I want both of you scoundrels for arson."

Morley, who was attempting to sneak out by the door, grimly returned and dropped into the chair indicated.

"I reckon the game's up now, Yardley," he said, with a sullen leer. "The infernal beak dies as hard as a cat."

"I am given life to look after such as you," sternly rejoined Keene. "Now, Yardley, what is the evidence you and Doctor Kendall were discussing?"

Yardley, pale and utterly disconcerted, hesitated for a moment.

"Produce it!" cried Keene sternly.

The physician felt in his vest pocket, drew forth a small object, and tossed it upon the operating table. It was a three-cornered portion of a fish bone, nearly half an inch across.

Now Doctor Kendall impulsively came forward.

"Good heavens, Inspector Keene!" he exclaimed, in tremulous tones, "what does your presence here mean?"

"It means," said Keene, turning to face him, "that these two men are under arrest, and that I will hear your story a little later. Go to your telephone, sir, and summon the police patrol."

CHAPTER X.

UNDER THE KNIFE.

Half an hour later, Chief Inspector Watts and Sheridan Keene were seated with Doctor Kendall in the physician's private office, with the door securely closed.

Yardley and Jimmy Morley had been lodged in the city prison, and the end of their rope was plainly to be a prison cell.

"Now, Doctor Kendall," said the chief, to whom Keene had reported all the evidence, "I understand from my officer that your attitude this morning, when you certainly could not have been aware of his presence, indicates that you may be innocent of any willful misdemeanor. I will frankly admit that we have suspected you of Stella Russell's murder. If we are wrong, we now wish to know it."

"You most assuredly are wrong, Chief Watts, though I admit that circumstances have appeared very strong against me," replied Doctor Kendall, with grave feeling.

"You were the man with whom she dined, were you not?"

"Oh, yes; though not exactly dined," said the physician, "for our interview was for a different purpose."

"Tell me the whole story, please."

"I will gladly do so, sir, now that a distortion of it is so apparent."

"Let me hear it."

Doctor Kendall bowed and drew himself up in his chair.

"The Russells, mother and daughter, were friends of mine years ago," he said gravely.

"In fact, I at one time thought of marrying Stella Russell, though it never came to pass. We retained our tender friendship, however, up to the time she and her mother went to Europe several years ago."

"Go on, sir."

"I heard nothing more of Stella Russell," continued the doctor, "until last Thursday afternoon, the day of her unfortunate death. I knew that they had arrived in Boston, but I had not seen them. About six o'clock on Thursday, I was called to my telephone by Miss Russell."

"Where was she?"

"At the hotel."

"What did she want?"

"She stated to me that she was in very great trouble, and implored me to come to her assistance. I told her that I would call on her at once in her rooms, but she immediately begged me not to do that. She stated that she was being watched by certain parties, who were constantly near her, and that our meeting must be a secret one."

"Did she plan it?"

"She had it planned already, sir. She said she had secured a private dining room, and told me where it was located. She said she would join me in the room at precisely eleven o'clock, after her return from the opera. She further stated that she knew how exceedingly jealous my wife always had been of her, and she suggested that I had better wear a disguise, lest any person should see me at the hotel in which she was located, and subsequently disclose the fact to my wife."

"Is this jealousy of your wife a fact?" asked the chief.

"A very lamentable one," bowed Doctor Kendall gravely. "I am rather unhappily married in that respect, sir; and hence I thought well enough of Miss Russell's advice to follow it. I also went so far as to give my wife a light drug at dinner, that she might drop asleep in the evening while I was with her, and not awake until after my return from the hotel. I did not imagine I should be detained there longer than an hour. I took all of these steps, sir, with the sole object of harmlessly deceiving my wife; though I now imagine, from what you have told me, that it has operated to augment your suspicions."

"Up to that time, then, you did not know what Miss Russell wanted of you?" said Chief Watts inquiringly.

"No, I did not."

"But you went to the hotel and met her, as planned?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did she want of you?"

"She wanted my help chiefly to foil the two scoundrels you have arrested here to-day, and who must have outrageously been imposing upon the girl's mother. It appeared that Mrs. Russell intended making a will disinheriting her daughter, unless Stella would marry——"

"We know all about that part of it, doctor," interposed Chief Watts. "What we now wish to learn is, what was Miss Russell's object in sending for you?"

"I can state that very briefly," bowed the physician. "Mrs. Russell, being about to make a will, and having been long away from Boston, had remarked to Stella that she thought of appealing to me to recommend my attorney. Stella seized upon this as an opportunity to deceive her mother, in which I think she was quite justified, and to circumvent Yardley."

"In what way?"

"By getting me to recommend a lawyer, and to arrange with him in advance to make a will that should be void on some obscure technicality after the death of Mrs. Russell. It was her intention to will her property to charity. If Stella's plan could have been operated, and such a will executed, the property could easily be claimed and secured by the girl."

"Do you know how such a will can be made, doctor?"

"There are many ways, sir. Stella's suggestion was that the lawyer draft a will bequeathing the property to the various churches and institutions Mrs. Russell had in mind, instead of to the boards of trustees of those organizations. That would have made the will void, sir, in the sight of the law; and the technicality is one which Mrs. Russell would not have been likely to detect."

"I see, I see!" nodded Chief Watts. "Was Mrs. Russell in poor health?"

"She has been a sufferer from Bright's disease, and her death has long been imminent."

"All this is now sufficiently plain," said Chief Watts gravely. "But what led to Stella Russell's death?"

As if from some painful recollection called up by the inquiry, a little of the color faded from Doctor Kendall's cheeks.

"I will tell you," said he. "While sitting at the table, explaining her situation to me in some little excitement, she was tasting, now and then, of a plate of fish near by her. Suddenly I observed that she was choking, and was almost in convulsions. A bone from the fish had lodged in her throat. I tried at once to remove it for her, and wanted to give an alarm. With looks and gestures, however, she implored me not to do so; and I saw that she feared lest I should be recognized in her company, and the plan ruined on which she was basing her hopes.

"Her condition quickly became so critical, that I resolved to perform an operation by which her life, at least, could be saved."

"What operation?"

"That of opening the trachea until the obstruction could be removed. The girl was then nearly unconscious and in convulsions.

"I had a small surgical case in my pocket. Taking out of it a scalpel, I bent above her to make the incision in the trachea, when she suddenly threw up one of her arms. It struck my hand a violent blow, that in which I held the knife, and it drove the sharp blade entirely through the jugular vein."

"Ah!" exclaimed Chief Watts; "it was an accident, then!"

"Precisely, sir, and a most dreadful one!" said Doctor Kendall. "But there then was no help for the girl, sir. I saw her die on the floor."

"And then?"

"Then, sir, I realized my own situation, the circumstances under which I had come there, my disguise, and the secrecy with which I had kept this appointment. I realized that I might be ruined by exposure, and my reputation as a man and a physician unworthily demeaned.

"While thus dismayed, I saw Yardley at the window, and I acted upon my first impulse, and resorted to flight. It seemed to me the only way by which I could save myself from ruin and exposure. That is all I have to say, sir; and it is the whole truth."

"Have you known that you were suspected, Doctor Kendall?" asked the chief.

"No, sir, not until this morning. I had made up my mind, if charges were ever made against me, to confess the truth at once. Hence I cared nothing about Yardley's threat. As for that miscreant, when he examined Stella Russell's body, he discovered the bone lodged in her throat, and removed it. I do not know what his design then was, though it soon developed when he saw me search for the same in examining the remains of the girl, and betray myself when I failed to find it."

"What about your silence on the subject up to the present time?"

"I have been actuated solely by my desire to save my reputation as a man and a physician, sir. That alone has been my object."

"Well, well," said Chief Watts gravely; "we will see if it cannot be saved, after all."

A look of relief swept to Doctor Kendall's fine countenance, and he impulsively held out his hand.

Chief Watts was as good as his remark had implied. Though the actual circumstances were made public in a general way, and the mystery satisfactorily cleared, the name of the physician involved was withheld.

Stella Russell was buried on the following Saturday, and nine days later her mother died, without having left her bed.

A true bill was found against both Yardley and Jimmy Morley by the grand jury, and they were tried for arson and easily convicted, each receiving a sentence of five years in the State's prison.

THE END.

MR. BILES, POLICEMAN.

By MAX ADELER.

The police force in our village, of course, is very small, but it is enthusiastic. One member of it, Mr. John Biles, is on duty at night, and he has theories respecting his work which are somewhat peculiar. One night, just after his appointment to the force, there was a terrific knocking at my front door, accompanied by loud calling of my name. I jumped from bed with an indistinct impression that some frightful catastrophe was impending, and seizing my revolver I went downstairs. While I was lighting the gas in the hall the knocking upon the door continued. I opened it and just missed a blow from the club of Mr. Biles, as it came upon the down stroke upon the door. As soon as he saw me he said:

"I called to let you know that no burglars have been breaking into your house yet to-night. She's all serene thus far. You needn't be a bit skeered."

Before I could decide upon the proper form of objurgation to hurl at him, he walked down the path with the air of a man who had done his duty, and a few moments later I heard him routing out Cooley. A few nights afterward I was awakened by another clatter at the front door, and presently I heard two pistol shots and the furious barking of a dog. I dressed hurriedly and came downstairs, pistol in hand, to ascertain who had been murdered. As I opened the door I saw Mr. Biles in the front yard in the act of raising his revolver above his head. Then he fired it, and a large dog by his side barked insanely. I called to him to inquire what on earth was the matter. He replied:

"Oh! you're there, are you? I was passing by on my round and I thought I'd just drop in and tell you that your house hain't ketched fire yet. Not a spark on her. You needn't be oneasy. If she bursts out I'll give you plenty of time. You kin sleep sound as a baby, without worrying. So good night."

Then he hurried up the street, and began to wake up Judge Pitman. The next night, about one o'clock, I heard more pounding at the door. I went to the window and called out:

"Who's there?"

'Me—John Biles."

"Well, what do you want? I wish you wouldn't be making this kind of disturbance every night."

"Are you engaged? I want to see you a minute about something particular."

I shut the window and descended. When I opened the front door, Mr. Biles said, in a cheerful voice:

"What do you think? Nobody's broke in and mur-

dered your hired girl. I seen the light in her window, and watched her put up the blind not more'n a minute ago. Great, ain't it? Don't you fret about her. She's all right while I'm on duty."

Then I slammed the door and went back to bed. A couple of nights afterward the front door was again attacked about midnight. Throwing up the window, I asked indignantly:

"Is that you, Biles?"

"Yes, sir. Can I speak a word with you in private?"

"Certainly you can't, you ruffian."

"Oh, all right! I merely wanted to say that there ain't a solitary cat yowling on any fence in this neighborhood. Everything's quiet as a Quaker meeting, excepting when Cooley's mules hollers occasionally in their sleep. Splendid night for sleeping, ain't it? Hope you'll get your rest."

Then as I closed the window, indignantly, I saw him move off to tackle the man over the way. The next night I was out at a party. When I came home about half past twelve, I observed Mr. Biles standing on the porch pounding the front door. As soon as he saw me he said:

"Been a-hammering here for half an hour. Thought you were awful sound asleep."

"Well, what's the matter?" I asked.

"Why, Butterwick's skye terrier has pups and I thought maybe you'd want to get one of 'em. Pure skye and perfect; sudden death on rats. Butterwick swapped 'em all three to me for a double-nosed pointer, and I don't mind letting you have one for a matter of five dollars. Is it a bargain? Take me up and I'll have it barking in your parlor before to-morrow night."

"Mr. Biles," I said, "hang Butterwick's pups! When I yearn for a pup, I will negotiate for it some other time than one o'clock in the morning. And I want you to understand that if you don't stop disturbing me in this manner I shall insist upon your discharge. Don't you come here again making such a racket, now mind me."

Mr. Biles went sullenly away, muttering something about people not appreciating a wide-awake policeman. Two nights afterward I heard a noise in my dining room. I went down and saw a man creeping through the front window. A party of burglars had entered, and, after ransacking the whole of the lower part of the house, had escaped with about two hundred dollars' worth of booty, leaving all the lights burning. I dressed and went out to hunt for the police. About a square down the street I saw Mr. Biles standing in front of Mr. Mix's house. I stopped to listen, and discovered that he had routed Mix out to tell him that a Dutch brig was coming up the bay with a load of bananas.

The next day Mr. Biles was discharged.

WHERE THE MOST ONE-EYED PEOPLE ARE FOUND.

The most one-eyed people are found in Germany, and in some portions of the United States. In the former country this is probably owing to the sword duels so common among German students, when the faces of the combatants get terribly scarred. An eye maker calculates that there are 336,000 persons with only one eye in the United States. In proportion to the population, there are more one-eyed people in Paterson, New Jersey, than in any other town in America or any other country. Apart from eyes lost in duels or rowdy fights, the great majority of artificial eyes are used by workmen, especially those engaged in iron foundries, where many eyes are put out by the sparks which fly about in all directions. It is a very rare occurrence to meet a woman having a glass eye.

THE "STARS AND STRIPES."

The "Stars and Stripes," it is supposed, were first given to the breeze by Paul Jones. The explanation is this: Congress resolved, on June 14, 1777, "that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternated red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." On September 3d the resolution was officially promulgated, and Jones was appointed to the command of the *Ranger* on the same day.

MOHAMMED.

Mohammed was the founder of the Mussulman religion, and lived in the sixth century. He came of an illustrious family, but being left an orphan, he early engaged in commerce, and used to go with his uncle's caravans from Mecca to Damascus. He soon made himself remarkable for his religious zeal, and having observed in his travels the infinite variety of sects which prevailed, he conceived the project of reforming the religion of his country, and uniting the religious sects into the worship of one God. With the help of disciples he framed his Koran, or Alcoran—the book which he pretended to have received at different times from heaven by the hands of the Angel Gabriel. At first he had only his wife and eight other followers; but these increased enormously before he died, though many of his converts were obtained, it must be confessed, not by reason, but by the irrefutable logic of the sword.

SPIDERS.

The body of every spider contains four little masses, pierced with a multitude of holes (imperceptible to the naked eye), each hole permitting the passage of a single thread; all the threads, to the amount of one thousand to each mass, join together when they come out, and make the single thread with which the spider spins its web, so that what we call a spider's thread consists of more than four thousand threads united.

A PLANT THAT COUGHS.

All have read of carnivorous plants, of laughing plants, and of plants that weep; but who has heard of a plant that coughs? There is the authority of a French botanist, however, for the statement that a plant in various tropical regions actually possesses the power to cough in the most approved manner. The fruit of this plant resembles the common bread bean. It appears that the coughing plant is something of a crank, that it easily works itself into a rage, and that it has a curious horror of all dust. As soon as a few grains of dust are deposited on its leaves, the air chambers that cover their faces and are the respiratory organs of the plant become filled with gas, swell, and end by driving out the gas with a slight explosion and a sound that resembles so much the cough of a child suffering from a cold as to carry a most uncanny sensation to the one beholding the phenomenon.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Suppress Accounts of Aviation Progress.

A semiofficial appeal to the German newspapers to refrain in the future from publishing news as to the voyages and evolutions of German military airships was published in the *Norddeutsche Allegemeine Zeitung*. They are asked not to record the advances made in aviation, and not to report bomb-throwing and machine-gun experiments carried out by military aviators. They are also requested to maintain silence generally as to developments in German military armament and equipment.

The government organ takes as its text the success of the British war office in concealing its supremacy in aviation and in the numbers of its military aëroplanes until Colonel Seely, the British secretary for war, made his startling announcement in the House of Commons on March 19.

Remarkable Electrocution.

A remarkable tragedy was caused at St. Junien, near Limoges, France, recently, by an electric current. A farmer named Jean Desoube was loading a cart with straw when his pitchfork came into contact with a live wire. The man was instantly killed, and the straw, cart, and barn were set on fire and destroyed.

Burglars Get Big Haul.

An East Side burglary, perpetrated by clever cracksmen recently, netted the thieves the largest haul of booty obtained in New York City in many years. Martin Simons & Sons, pawnbrokers, at 94 Hester Street, were the victims, and the property stolen included $250,000 worth of jewelry, diamonds, and other precious stones and $100,000 worth of negotiable securities.

The thieves gained access to the pawnbroker's richly stored vaults by means of a tunnel from an abutting building on a neighboring street. They made a clean get-away with their valuable loot.

Worked His Way Up.

Edward F. Terry is an erecting contractor who has put his sign manual on a hundred cities and rivers of the country. He recently put forty thousand tons of steel into the Manhattan Bridge, and a hundred thousand tons into the Grand Central Railroad Station, in New York City. More than $115,000,000 has been paid on contracts carried out by him. Mr. Terry has worked his way up from driving red-hot rivets, and is only fifty-four years old.

French Convict Swallows Needles.

A prisoner in the Ploetzensee prison, near Berlin, named George Schlick, has made various attempts to force the prison authorities to discharge him, or, at any rate, remove him to the hospital ward. He at first simulated insanity, and when this failed to deceive the authorities he started a hunger strike. He is a powerfully built man, however, with a great appetite, and the pangs of hunger finally conquered his resolution.

He then adopted a new scheme. While making bags in prison he carefully concealed as many needles as he could, and while at work with his fellow prisoners he swallowed the lot. He was hurried to the hospital, where he became unconscious.

Afterward he was removed to a Berlin hospital, where he was to be operated upon. The man was in a critical condition.

They "Booed" Jake Stahl.

Jake Stahl's recent return to Illinois field as leader of the world's champion Boston Red Sox is in striking contrast to his début on the same diamond in the spring of 1901. Playing an outfield for the Illinois, the "big Dutchman," as he was called, gave such a miserable exhibition of fielding that he was "booed" by the fans.

"Deacon" Briggs, the official scorer, in the old score book which Coach Huff unearthed recently allots two errors to Jake. "Deacon" was ever charitable, however, and the old-time fans insinuate that the future leader of the world's best was running around in circles to keep from being bounced on the head with the ball. Although Stahl made up in some measure for his raggedness in the field by his hitting, his misplays practically lost the game with Michigan, then disputing with the Illini College baseball honors in the West.

Comiskey's new-born White Sox, who were training on Illinois field, were among the disconsolate Illini rooters that day. Dick Padden, Isbell, and the rest were all crazy over the batting of the big fellow. They admitted sadly, however, that he did not look as if he ever would be an outfielder.

One week later, the Illinois team again took the field. Stahl was still there—but not in the outfield. Instead, he was behind the bat. Indiana was the opponent. Stahl caught Carl Lundgren perfectly. His batting was marvelous, two home runs, a double and two singles out of seven times up. Illinois piled up 35 runs in all. Stahl had come into his own.

In the season of 1901, Jake batted .443 and fielded .970. In 1902 his batting slumped to .273, hardly remarkable for the hard-hitting collegian who swept like a whirlwind over the Eastern diamonds. In 1903, his final season, Jake batted .444 and fielded .984. The Illini played 19 games, won 18, and Jake had 10 home runs to his credit.

One of these feats was preserved to posterity and the glory of the orange-and-blue hero on May 9, 1903, when Illinois played Michigan again. With the bases full, Stahl smashed out a liner that was not retrieved until long after he had completed the circuit. Never before or since was there such a clout. An amateur photographer, in the excitement of the occasion, jammed his button and unwittingly secured a wonderful snap shot of the home run. Jake has just swung, the base runners are starting off, and Jerry Utley, the Michigan pitcher, is looking hopelessly at the ball in the air. Every cigar store, billiard hall, and the like in Champaign and Urbana has an enlarged picture.

Stahl was easily the best college catcher in the West. He contributed a daring born of his football experience that would make him take desperate chances for fouls. In a tight game with the University of Chicago, he dived into the bleachers for a foul, caught the ball, but struck

his head, cutting an ugly gash. Senseless, he clung to the ball, and soon hurried back to his protector and mask. Feats such as these endeared the big boy to the Illini rooters.

A fortunate visit by Henry Killilea, of Boston, to Evanston, where Illinois was playing Northwestern, gave Jake to the American League. It was one of the last games of the year for the Illini, and they were in great fettle. The game was called about the sixth inning because the Purple outfielders refused to perform any longer. The score at this time, according to the best evidence, was 35 to 0. Jake led the assault. Even if the game was not a test, the picture that the strapping collegian made at the bat so impressed the scout that he had Jake's name on a contract before night.

Revived After Doctors Lost Hope.

After physicians had given him up as hopelessly injured, Joseph Price opened his eyes in the City Hospital, in Atlantic City, late one afternoon and asked: "Where am I at?" A thorough examination showed he was not even seriously hurt, but his state of coma had been caused by fright.

Price drove a double team belonging to the Atlantic Products Company directly in front of a fast express. It killed his team, smashed his steel wagon, a telegraph pole, and hurled him into a meadow. He was rushed to the City Hospital in a delivery wagon.

He remained unconscious for almost three hours. Only a slight pulse was detected, and one of the physicians had just remarked, "He's a goner," when he revived.

Soccer Pays in England.

Daniel Shea, who plays the inside right position of the West Ham Association football team of England, has been transferred to the Blackburn Rovers, another English team, for a fee said to be as high as $10,000.

Shea, who was entitled to a benefit next season, has secured a three years' agreement from the Rovers. He will act as partner to Simpson, for whom the Blackburn management paid $8,000.

Large Migration to Canada.

High up among the hills of Oxfordshire, England, between the villages of Combe and Stonesfield, there is a little place called by a freakish fancy Paradise. In some respects it is not inaptly named. The country is extremely beautiful; the land fruitful. But the inhabitants are leaving it—leaving Paradise, not singly, but in scores, out of their scanty hundreds, for a golden vision in the West.

In April a party of nearly fifty people will leave Combe and Stonesfield for Canada, more than 5 per cent of the population. From Charlbury, a rather larger village in the vicinity, another fifty are going at the same time. Whole families have emigrated; fathers going first have sent home for their wives and children, and brothers have sent for brothers. Nearly 150 people have left the two smaller villages out of a combined population of about 800.

Young Combe and young Stonesfield abroad are doing remarkably well. The tales of their doings fire the blood of the stay-at-homes. There is the first of the Woodleigh boys, who went out last spring, and in the course of a year has sent home nearly $500. Two brothers are joining him this spring and one more next year. The climate in the West seems to work strange transformations of character, too. One man who was not noted for hard work at home set off nine months ago, and, to the joy of his wife, besides sending her home $3.75 a week regularly, has now forwarded $250 for her passage and to buy warm clothing.

From the Black Head Inn, at Combe, the whole family is migrating. Six years ago the eldest son was the pioneer of emigration from the village. In Canada he has married and has a house of his own, for which he has been offered $3,500. His father followed him a year ago, and in the twelve months saved nearly $500. He has returned to get his wife and children, his son-in-law, and all his family.

In rural Oxfordshire, meantime, field after field that once was arable land, is being laid down to grass. There is an insufficiency of labor. Last summer the women had to go into the fields for harvest, and the schools were closed so that the children could assist in digging potatoes.

It was recently reported that from the village of Doveholes, Derbyshire, 250 out of a population of 1,000 had left for Canada.

No Room for Fat Men.

Plans for the leanest building in New York were recently filed with the building department by Architect Charles I. Berg. Four stories in height, it will be erected on the southeast corner of Broadway and Worth Street, with a five-foot frontage on Broadway and a 100-foot frontage the other way.

"It was not planned as a home for embonpoint or avoirdupois," said Mr. Berg. "A cigar store will occupy the first floor, where panetelas will be sold to slim customers by a slender salesman. I believe a bar will take up the space back of the cigar counter, and I am assured that there will be no room for big heads.

"The stairways leading from the first floor to the basement and second floor take the whole width of the building. The construction will be entirely of iron and glass. Above the second floor—which will be eight feet wide owing to a bay window, and rising to a height of sixty feet—will be a framework for signs. The cost is estimated at $10,000. The owner is Henry W. Hayden, a lawyer, with offices at No. 16 Exchange Place. The plot has been owned by his family for generations."

A one-story corrugated iron building occupied by a tobacconist stands on the site of the proposed skyscraper skeleton.

Police May Stop Bouts.

That police interference in stopping a boxing bout is legal, regardless of any objections that may be advanced by the referee, was the opinion handed down by Attorney General Carmody, who was asked by the State Athletic Commission to decide the power of the police and that of the referee.

The question was the result of a complaint from the Dorp A. C., of Schenectady, that a sergeant of police had entered the ring during the progress of a bout, and ordered that it be stopped. The club contended that the referee alone has power to stop a bout, according to rule 27 of the Frawley law. The attorney general holds that "the power given by the statute to the State Athletic

Commission to regulate sparring contests cannot in any sense be considered so broad as to supersede the powers of the general officers of the law, charged with maintaining the peace. The granting of a license to hold sparring exhibitions does not create within the inclosure a freedom from police supervision."

A Curious Fraud.

A strange case of fraud on the war office, at London, is revealed in the report of the comptroller and auditor general on the army appropriation account for 1911-12.

Two pensions granted in 1814 were paid for nearly 100 years, and no suspicion was raised until 1908, when, "in view of the advanced age of the pensioners," the cases were reported for special investigation, the result was discovery that the pensioners had been impersonated for many years.

The army funds, states the report, were defrauded of about $2,295.

It is explained that in 1814 an allowance of $35 per annum, afterward increased to $45, was awarded to each of the eight children of an ensign in the Eighty-seventh Foot. The allowances were issued upon the production of proper forms of declaration, and receipts duly attested by the notaries public in the United States, and it was not until the special inquiries were made that it was discovered that one of the pensioners died about 1873 and the other about 1890.

Steps to be taken to secure better documentary evidence of identity and to prevent impersonation of pensioners are now under consideration.

Senators Would Have but Poor Show.

If anything should happen to Walter Johnson, where would the Washingtons finish in the American League race? Already baseball sharps, assuming that Johnson will be as much of a puzzle this year as last, are predicting that the "Senators" will win thirty-five games in which he occupies the box. The records show that since 1907, when he made his bow, Johnson has pitched in 198 games, receiving credit for 108 victories and 84 defeats, a winning percentage of .563. Opponents in the same period have made 1,287 base hits and 477 runs. Johnson has given 360 bases on balls and has fanned 1,163 batsmen.

Last year the big fellow took part in forty games, winning thirty and losing ten, a percentage of .750, the best of his career. He won twenty-three and lost fifteen in 1911, while in 1910 he scored twenty-four victories, with sixteen defeats. He pitched in forty-one games in 1910, and struck out 303 men, his greatest performance in this respect. In 1909 Johnson won twelve games and lost twenty-four, but the previous year he won fourteen and lost eleven. During his first season with the Senators he participated in eighteen games, winning five and losing eight. Johnson is in prime condition at Charlotteville, and Griffith believes that he will break all pitching records during the coming season, even excelling the record of nineteen straight held jointly by Rube Marquard and Keefe.

Between Giants and Cubs.

Roger Bresnahan has joined the ranks of the prophets. The noted catcher, who will wear a Chicago Cub uniform this year, comes out boldly with the assertion that the team under the management of John J. Evers has a better chance to win the National League pennant than the Pittsburghs, providing, of course, that the Giants fail to come up to expectations. Bresnahan aired his views when asked recently why he signed a Cub contract instead of accepting the Pirates' liberal offer.

"I didn't double cross the Pirates and Barney Dreyfuss," replied Roger, "because I never gave my word that I would play with them after I settled up with the Cardinals. I accepted what I believed was the best proposition available. Murphy offered me a fine contract to go with the Cubs, but it was no better than the one Dreyfuss was ready to pay. Hermann, too, was anxious to secure me for Cincinnati, and probably would have topped both Murphy and Dreyfuss in point of salary figures. I had all I wanted of a loser in St. Louis, and, naturally, having experienced the sensation of catching for a world's champion team in New York under McGraw, I wanted to get with another winner. The Cubs looked pretty good to me on paper, and as Evers is a pal, I decided to sign and do my best.

"I firmly believe that the Cubs will finish ahead of the Pirates and will come very near winning the flag. The Cubs would have taken the pennant last year with a little more strength in the box. If we get into the world's series, there'll be a slice of big money for me which there wouldn't be a chance of picking up if I had gone to Pittsburgh or Cincinnati. The Cubs have a greatly strengthened pitching department, an improved outfield, and a corking good shortstop in Corriden to replace Tinker. Archer and yours truly will make things hum behind the bat, and that means death to base stealers. I am satisfied to play ball and let somebody else do the managing in future. It makes life easier. We've got the Giants to beat."

Thrilling Experience With Tropical Animal.

A Dublin customhouse officer, Cecil Graves, was attacked in Rathmines, one of the suburbs, by a cheetah, an animal of the leopard type, found in India and Africa, which had evidently escaped from its captors. He had his dog and a thick stick with him, and he succeeded in killing the animal.

"I was taking a walk near Grosvenor Square," said Mr. Graves, "when a strange-looking animal, somewhat larger than an Irish terrier, suddenly sprang at me out of a hedge near some gardens. With a hoarse bark, it gripped my trouser leg near the knee, tearing the cloth. I shook the animal off, and a fierce struggle then took place between it and my dog.

"Seizing the animal's throat, the cheetah dragged him toward the hedge. I caught the cheetah a heavy blow behind the ear with my stick, which killed him. I took the body home to my house, where it awaits identification."

The surmise is that the animal was brought from abroad by some resident with the object of making it a pet.

Innocent Man in Jail Four Years.

The *Berliner Morgenpost* has obtained from the prosaic proceedings of the Reichstag details of a case resembling that of Adolf Beck, who received two kings' pardons and a grant of $25,000 for two wrongful convictions, under one of which he served the usual proportion of a sentence of seven years' penal servitude.

A Thuringian tannery owner named August Brehm was

convicted in 1892 of burning down his factory for the purpose of securing the insurance money, and was sentenced to five years' penal servitude. He was released after four years on account of his good behavior. A year or two later he succeeded in establishing his innocence.

The petitions committee of the Reichstag, before whose attention Herr Brehm succeeded, after fifteen years' effort, in bringing his case, has now recommended the government to revise the laws providing indemnification for persons wrongfully convicted.

Herr Brehm, at the time of his conviction, had an estate of $100,000. As soon as he was arrested his creditors took possession of his properties and he left prison a pauper. Attempts to secure an indemnity from the local authorities resulted in a judgment in his favor for $565.

Herr Brehm refused this amount. In the meantime the authorities seized half of it as the cost of the proceedings against him, and the balance was attached by his creditors. Herr Brehm is now 65 years of age.

Wedding Ring Found After Twenty Years.

While walking along the beach at Trouville, France, a girl found a wedding ring on which was engraved: "F. de Beaumont and Charlotte Laboulaye, 24th March, 1892."

The ring belongs to the Marquise de Beaumont, who lost it at Trouville over twenty years ago while bathing.

The ring was forwarded to the marquise, who was delighted to recover it.

Another Airship Hoax.

Special airships have now begun to appear in Germany, and elaborate official apparatus was set in motion close to Berlin by a story just as well authenticated, and apparently even more baseless, than those which recently attracted so much attention in England.

It was shortly after nightfall that two women returned from work in the fields to Caputh, a large village some miles to the west of Potsdam, with a tale that they had seen an airship catch fire and blow up over a vast fir forest that covers the greater part of that district. They said the exploded airship was very similar to the *Hansa*, which has for some time been stationed in Potsdam, and which they had repeatedly seen. The vessel, they stated, had two cars, and while they were watching it a black cloud of smoke suddenly rose from one of these. Then flames appeared and quickly enveloped the hull of the airship, which began to fall rapidly toward the earth. Just before it reached the treetops one of the cars became detached, and the vessel, thus lightened, soared rapidly upward.

It was particularly this last detail which convinced the local authorities that the tale was true, and induced them to communicate with the military headquarters at Potsdam and the fire brigades of the surrounding villages. Soon a couple of fire engines, a company of Jagers mounted on bicycles, and a motor ambulance, arrived at Caputh, and under the guidance of the two women who had seen the vision proceeded to search the woods for the débris and the victims.

The quest was carried out most methodically. What was taken to be the probable area within which the doomed airship had descended was mapped out and systematically beaten by lines of men who kept in touch with one another by means of vocal signals. The hunt was maintained until between 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning, without yielding any positive result, and it was resumed at a later hour and carried on for some hours, with no more success.

Meanwhile telephonic and telegraphic inquiries had shown that all the airships in Germany were lying safely in their sheds, and that the women must have been either the victims of an illusion or the authors of a hoax.

Hydrophobia Healer Dies.

Phillip McGovern, who was said to possess a family secret for the cure of hydrophobia, recently died in County Cavan, Ireland. He cured so many cases that patients were sent to him from all parts of Ireland.

Brave Collie Wins Life-saving Medal.

For saving his master's life, Glen, a sagacious collie, owned by James Wilson, junior, Berwickshire, England, has been awarded the medal of the National Canine Defense League.

Wilson was attacked by a bull, which had thrown him and was about to gore him, when Glen seized it by the head, and by thus diverting its attention enabled the farmer to throw his coat over the infuriated animal's horns.

The Old Divining-rod Story.

The French Academy of Science has appointed a special commission to investigate the properties attributed to the "divining rod," a forked twig, by means of which some people say they can discover water or metals, and even oil, underground, by its movements in their hands.

One of the theories to be tested is whether secret springs possess radioactivity which reacts on people of extreme sensibility.

Too Young to be Scouts.

King Alfonso has written to the Duke of Tamames, the founder of the Boy Scout movement in Spain, expressing his regret that owing to the tender age of his sons—the Prince of the Austrias, who is 5, and the Infante Don Jaime, who is 4—they are not eligible at present for enrollment as Boy Scouts. To show his sympathy with the movement his majesty promises an annual subscription of $100 to the corps.

Cannibals on the Wane.

The people of the Solomon Islands—the Cannibal Islands—are rapidly decreasing in numbers. Doctor W. Thorold Quaife, a medical officer in the islands, declares that the decrease in the population is due to the fact that tribal warfare has ceased, and the natives no longer kill one another.

This warfare, Doctor Quaife adds, used to keep the natives "fit" and energetic. Now they have become lazy and inert, and the race is fast deteriorating, and seems likely to die out in course of time.

Statistics of Voters.

When Federal statisticians finished figuring they discovered that just one out of every forty-seven men who voted for Woodrow Wilson for president was a candidate for a Federal position.

They also deduced the fact that there will be an army of heartsick and disappointed office seekers, numbering upward of 121,000, for there are 10,384 jobs to be filled

and 131,530 patriots who have signified their willingness to aid the government.

The question of patronage is giving President Wilson and members of his cabinet some uneasy hours. Every effort is being made to share the feelings of those whose application must be turned down while at the same time the available and fit men for the various places are being sought.

The task of singling out the proper material without causing offense to those whose ambitions necessarily must be wrecked in the process has proved a delicate task.

While Postmaster General Burleson has the distribution of a greater number of "plums" than any other member of the cabinet, he is in a happy position as compared with Secretary Wilson, of the new department of labor.

Mr. Wilson must organize his entire department, and, although he has at his disposal only twelve positions, he has more than 5,000 applications on file.

Losses on Tornadic Insurance.

Enormous damage caused by tornadoes in Nebraska, Iowa, and Indiana brought out the statement from insurance companies that losses thus far this year on tornadic insurance breaks all records, while fire losses are smaller than usual.

Tornadoes generally do not come so early in the year. Insurance companies say that the recent storms in the south were unusually destructive, and that the Nebraska storm will pile up the losses.

Figures on the policies affected by the Omaha storm are not yet available, but it is said that many buildings destroyed were protected by tornado insurance. One Eastern company collected $134,012 in premiums on such policies in Nebraska alone in 1912.

A Bonus for Bathers.

Harrison Brothers & Co., of Philadelphia, have offered to give every man in their employ fifteen cents every time he takes a bath. Two-thirds of the 700 workers at the plant already have accepted the offer.

The baths are limited to one a day for each employee, to be taken when going off duty at night. The company furnishes nickel-plated equipment, towels, soap, showers, needles, et cetera. When the bath is over the employee gets a check from the attendant and at the end of the week he cashes them in at fifteen cents apiece.

It is figured that if all of the men adopt the plan the total cost to the concern in bonuses will be $32,760 a year. The idea was suggested to the firm by Doctor Francis D. Patterson, former chief police surgeon of Philadelphia, who has charge of the welfare department of the plant.

"Cheap insurance against sickness," is what he calls the fifteen-cent-bath plan.

Startling Exhibit at Congress.

A severed hand, mummified simply by the application of human magnetic currents without chemicals, was shown to the members of the second international congress of experimental psychology. The hand was cut from a body in the Paris public morgue and was subjected daily for fifty-five days to magnetic influences emanating from Doctor Georges Durville, the secretary of the congress, Madame Reinaud, and Monsieur Picot.

The hand was examined and touched by various psychologists. It appeared much like the hand of an Egyptian mummy. It had lost three-eighths of its weight by evaporation during the process.

Doctor Durville explained to the congress that the result had been wrought by vital currents from the operators, and suggested that similar processes might have been used in ancient Egypt.

Among the curious apparatus exhibited at the congress was one invented by Doctor Fayor to measure psychic force. Another was a "suggestometer," to measure the capacities of persons to displace objects without touching them.

War Department Bars Third Degree.

The war department has forbidden the practice of the "third degree" in the examination of enlisted men suspected of military offenses and a recent circular prohibiting officers from asking incriminating questions of prisoners under examination has called forth serious objections. Officers insist the order is calculated to injure the service by depriving the examining authorities of opportunity to learn the truth.

The department, however, adheres to the principle of relieving a man from the obligation to incriminate himself, though it has modified the original circular by striking out the statement that "a falsehood told in answer to such questions will not be made a subject of trial."

A New Hydroplane Ferry.

That aviation is soon to be placed upon a commercial basis in San Francisco became evident recently, when W. H. Buttner, fiscal agent of the newly incorporated "Aërial Yacht Company," filed duplicate articles at the office of County Clerk Mulcrevy.

This company, which not only will provide for the instruction of aërial navigation, but also plans to institute hydroplane ferry service in the near future between this city and bay points, is the outgrowth of a newly invented craft, designed by Silas Christofferson, the local birdman, said to be the last word in autoaërial efficiency.

In model his flying boat is similar to the Curtis hydroplane, but many innovations which tend to the comfort and safety of those on board have been added.

It is designed to carry two passengers besides the pilot and will be luxuriously finished in mahogany, with deep upholstered seats not unlike those of a motor car.

Instead of the usual pontoons, a regular boat has been provided, which can be instantly detached from the flying apparatus, so that in case of accident the boat can be driven through the water under its own power.

The hull is 24 feet long and 3 feet wide, with a floating capacity of 4,000 pounds, divided into six airtight compartments. The engine which is set in the boat, is a Curtis 80-horse-power model and the power will be transmitted to the propeller by chain.

The boat is entirely covered over, excepting the cockpit, which is protected by a rising hood, affording absolute protection from spray. The engine is equipped with a self-starter, and the plane is provided with an electric-lighting system.

The exhaust from the motor is so arranged as to heat the seating space in case of cold weather. Many people have been taken on short flights by Christofferson, and much interest has followed the appearance of the new air craft.

Bob Fawler, the Gilroy aviator, will soon be here with

his new gauge tractor hydroplane, while Sutro, who is already established at Harbor View, and Christofferson, who is at Fort Mason, are daily giving exhibitions of their skill in handling their craft.

It is expected that the hydro fleet will continue to expand, as San Francisco Bay affords great opportunity for this style of craft.

Protest Against Gum-chewing Films.

Three thousand girl stenographers have signed a petition circulated in Montreal, Canada, protesting against the portrayal of members of their craft in motion pictures as chewers of gum and wearers of "rats." The petition will be sent to the makers of moving-picture films in Canada and the United States.

"Perfect" Man Swamped by Proposals.

Letters and telegrams are coming to H. L. Shrader, a Kansas City student, at the Missouri University, in Columbia, who recently was adjudged the most nearly perfect man physically among the 1,500 students there.

Since the publication in the university of the assertion by the athletic directors that he was, perhaps, the most nearly perfect man physically in America, his mail has been heavy almost every day. He has received offers of vaudeville engagements and boxing and wrestling engagements, but the greater number of letters are from young women. These come not only from Missouri and Kansas, but from widely scattered parts of the Southwest.

Several of the girl writers advocate marriage in the interest of eugenics. One girl says she is physically perfect herself, and, therefore, thinks she would make a fit wife in the interests of eugenics.

Shrader refuses to give the names or addresses of the girl writers or any of the letters, and he declined to permit copies of them to be made.

Advice from a Governor.

A deal was closed whereby Vincent Astor will probably add hundreds of acres to his Ferncliffe lands, which are being turned into an experimental farm. It is said that Mr. Astor is so well pleased with the result of his first efforts at scientific farming that he is ready to work a large tract as an object lesson for the farmers of Dutchess County.

At Unionvale Mr. Astor has obtained an option on about 700 acres. It is said that he asked Governor Sulzer his advice about buying land, and that the governor answered: "By all means invest your money in land. It is the safest investment from every point of view; and further your plans for experimenting upon your farms in Dutchess County."

A Good Temperance Talk.

"Booze and baseball don't mix, never did, and never will," said Manager Connie Mack, of the famous Philadelphia Athletics. "A pitcher who thinks he can fan old Herman W. Souse is simply pitching to the greatest home-run hitter he ever faced.

"Once in a while you hear of some marvel who can stay out all night, drink all the breweries dry, wreck a few taxicabs, and otherwise enjoy himself, and then step into the box and pitch a wonderful game of ball. Players who haven't any more sense point to Rube Waddell, Bugs Raymond, and that brand, and say: 'Ah, those were the good old days. None of your high-priced managers and their red tape then. And what wonderful players we produced in those days!'

"Well, look at Waddell—one of the most remarkable pitchers nature ever produced. But Waddell, with all his talent, couldn't stay in the major leagues. Why? Because he stood there and pitched himself to Old Man Barleycorn and finally every one he threw was slammed over the fence. And that's the way they all go. Is it so wonderful, after all?

"No, sir, the day of the stewed ball player has gone, and it won't come back. If the members of my team want to drink, all right. But they can't drink and play ball at the same time. That's settled. They can do whichever they prefer, but they can't do both.

"There are no exceptions to my rule, either. Any manager will tell you the same. 'A short life and a merry one'—that's it. And the merrier it is, the shorter it will be in the big leagues."

Water Polo a Brutal Game?

Frank Sullivan, of Chicago, who has officiated as Princeton's swimming and water-polo coach for the last two years, came to the defense of the latter sport in a statement and severely criticized the recent action of the Amateur Athletic Union which substituted for water polo the game of water soccer, in which the ducking in the present game is replaced by frequent passing. This action was taken on the claim that water polo was rough and brutal, attacks which Sullivan says are unreasonable.

According to the Princeton coach, the Amateur Athletic Union took action after the Chicago Athletic Club-New York Athletic Club game last year, which was characterized by rough play. Mr. Sullivan says that this rough play was due to the incompetence of the officials, who failed to call fouls, and that, further, the members of these teams had been playing opposite each other for more than ten years, and in this event the game may merely develop into personal retaliation.

Backed by twenty years' experience, Mr. Sullivan declares that he has never known of a man to be seriously hurt in the game, nor of any killed, a record unsurpassed by most sports.

Alaska's Huge Coal Wealth.

The defense in the trial of Albert C. Frost and four others charged with defrauding the government out of Alaskan coal lands valued at $10,000,000 was resumed before Federal Judge Landis, at Chicago.

William Griffiths, a coal-mining expert, was cross-examined by counsel for the government in regard to the accuracy of statistics in his testimony on direct examination. The witness testified that the coal lands in Alaska extended over 900 square miles, and that there was an available supply of 1,500,000,000 tons of coal in that territory.

Gambling House Built on a Yacht.

The proprietor of the Casino, at Ostend, has made arrangements to have a luxurious gambling room fitted up on a large steam yacht which will ply between Ostend and other watering places.

The gambling will take place only when the yacht is outside the three-mile limit.

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We give herewith a list of all the back numbers in print. You can have your news-dealer order them or they will be sent direct by the publishers to any address upon receipt of the price in money or postage-stamps.

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7—Zanabayah, the Terrible.
8—The Seven-headed Monster.
9—The Woman of the Mask.
0—The Masked Woman's Daring Plot.
2—Black Madge's Vengeance.
4—A Tragedy of the Footlights.
5—The Maynard Woman's Double.
—Three Against Fifteen.
—A Mystery of Two Passengers.
—The House of Secrets.
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4—Retrieved from the Grave.
5—The Mystery Man of 7-Up Ranch.
56—A Bad Man of Montana.
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566—A Mystery in India Ink.
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569—The Syndicate of Crooks.
570—The Order of the Python.
571—Tried for His Life.
572—A Bargain With a Thief.
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574—The Mystery of the Empty Grave.
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576—The Dead Man on the Roof.
577—A Double-barreled Puzzle.
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579—Jasper Ryan's Counter Move.
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581—Plotters Against a Nation.
582—Mignon Duprez, the Female Spy.
583—A Mystery of High Society.
584—A Million Dollars Reward.
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586—The "Shadow."
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588—A Victim of Magic.
589—A Plot Within a Palace.
590—The Countess Zeta's Defense.
591—The Princess' Last Effort.
592—The Two Lost Crittendens.
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594—Enlaska, the Beautiful Queen.
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596—A Battle of Wit and Skill.
597—Vanderdyken, the Millionaire.
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601—Nick Carter in Japan.
602—Tatlka, the Geisha Girl.
603—By Order of the Emperor.
604—The Convict's Secret.
605—The Man in the Dark.
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607—The Mysterious Mr. Peters.
608—A Woman at Bay.
609—The Balloon Tragedy.
610—Nick Carter's Strangest Case.
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613—The Senator's Plot.
614—The Madness of Morgan.
615—A Million-dollar Hold-up.
616—Nick Carter's Submarine Clue.
617—Under the Flag of Chance.
618—The Case Against Judge Bernard.
619—Down to the Grave.
620—The Fatal Javelin.
621—The Ghost of Nick Carter.
622—A Strange Coincidence.
623—Pauline—A Mystery.
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657—The Black Hand Nemesis.
658—A Masterly Trick.
659—A Dangerous Man.
660—Castor, the Poisoner.
661—The Castor Riddle.
662—A Tragedy of the Bowery.
663—Four Scraps of Paper.
664—The Secret of the Mine.
665—The Dead Man in the Car.
666—Nick Carter's Master Struggle.
667—The Aircraft Spectre.
668—The Broken Latch.
669—Nick Carter's Sudden Peril.
670—The Man with the Missing Thumb.
671—Feltman, the "Fence."
672—A Night with Nick Carter.
673—In the Nick of Time.
674—The Dictator's Treasure.
675—Pieces of Eight.
676—Behind the Mask.
677—The Green Patch.
678—The Jinah Thread.
679—The Live-wire Clue.
680—The Vampires of the Tenement.
681—The Policy King Baffled.
682—The Madman's Gig.
683—A Life at Stake.
684—Trailing a Secret Thread.
685—The Crimson Flash.
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